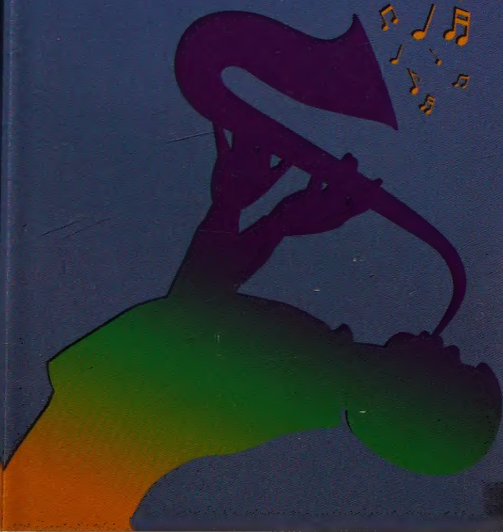


The Hymn

Volume 66 No. 1
Winter 2015

A Journal of
Congregational Song

THE HYMN SOCIETY
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
July 12-16, 2015
New Orleans



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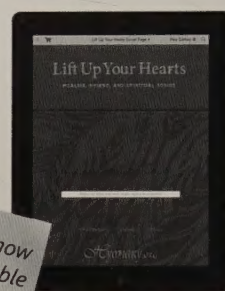
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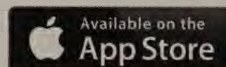
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EDITOR'S NOTES

“Somebody’s Callin’ My Name: Jazz, Jambalaya, and Jubilee” is going to be an exciting Annual Conference for The Hymn Society in New Orleans, July 12-16, 2015. The details can be found in this issue, from Paul Powell’s article on the history of the city itself to the brochure with its information on plenaries, festivals, workshops, and schedule. We hope to see you in New Orleans!

Our President, Jacque Jones, shares the energy and hard work of The Society’s Executive Committee on the President’s Page, giving Executive Director Deb Loftis a chance to continue doing the excellent work she is doing on fund-raising, planning our conference/s, and helping to launch the Center for Congregational Song.

The first part of an article from a 2013 Emerging Scholar, Becca Whitla, takes us to Cuba to consider the hymnody there. The second part of Becca’s article will appear in our Spring 2015 issue. If you know any current or recent students doing research on hymnody, check out Lim Swee Hong’s column on The Hymn Society’s Emerging Scholars Forum and encourage them to apply.

David Toledo analyzes *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* after describing the context of Southern Baptist hymnals, giving us insight into that tradition and its singing.

New columnist Jim Clemens shares his process of composing a short set of piano pieces based on the hymn tune LEONI. May his description of his process and the resulting compositions inspire you as you enliven congregational song where you serve.

Jason Runnels is in his second year of indexing THE HYMN, for which we give him thanks. Fred Graham is now heading up the reviewing of books and media for THE HYMN and we look forward to what his team of reviewers will share. If you know of things that we ought to be reviewing, please send them to Fred or alert him so that he can contact the publisher to get a review copy.

One correction from the Autumn issue (65:4); the photograph of Brian Hehn on page 18 was taken by Mary Rouse. Thank you, Mary!

In the midst of often-too-busy days, where are you finding ways to sing God’s song? What hymns are singing their way into your heart? What friends are you telling about The Hymn Society and bringing to our conference in New Orleans? For me, knowing that all of you are out there doing these things is enough to brighten too many grey, snowy and icy days, and for that I give thanks.

Robin Knowles Wallace, Editor
rwallace@mtso.edu

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THE HYMN is a peer-reviewed journal of congregational song for church musicians, clergy, scholars, poets, and others with varied backgrounds and interests. A journal of research and opinion, containing practical and scholarly articles, THE HYMN reflects diverse cultural and theological identities, and also provides exemplary hymn texts and tunes in various styles. Opinions expressed in THE HYMN are not necessarily those of the Editor or of The Hymn Society.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Have you ever wanted to be a fly on the wall at an Executive Committee meeting? What a hard-working, dedicated, and faithful group of people make up your Executive Committee (EC). I am sure this has been the case in the past and will continue to be so in the future. When I was asked to consider becoming the President of The Hymn Society I knew this, and the idea of taking the leadership of this energetic group was daunting. I must say, the writers of our constitution showed great foresight when they designed the leadership to move from President-Elect to President to Immediate-Past-President, allowing for a time of preparation, a period of leadership, and a continuation of institutional memory.

EC meetings are intense and exhausting. At its fall meeting, the EC customarily meets for three days. Our days at Richmond Hill retreat center (where recent meetings have been held) begin with Morning Prayer at 7:00 and breakfast at 7:30. Having plugged in our laptops, we begin work at 8:30. Midday prayer interrupts us at 12:00; we return from lunch at 1:30. Then it's Evening Prayer at 6:00, dinner, and re-convening at 7:30, often ending well after 9:00. If you are gasping for air, I can certainly understand why. And please do not think that this much time is required because time is being wasted. We work from a carefully planned agenda that is laid out to allow time for business that is "cut and dried" as well as time for visionary thinking and thoughtful planning. The agenda usually covers the upcoming two conferences, the budget, nominations, long-range planning, and reports from various committees. This year a major focus was on the plan for the Center for Congregational Song. Speaking for myself, at the end of the three days I am exhausted and exhilarated. We have prayed together, sung together, worked hard, laughed merrily, and accomplished much.

As I assembled the agenda for the fall 2014 meeting, I gave a lot of thought to the structure and makeup of the EC. EC terms are relatively short – new members must hit the ground running and get involved quickly. EC members come from various leadership backgrounds. Some have served on boards and others have not. Although the EC is geographically diverse, we work under a model where we are only face-to-face twice a year. Conference calls help but they are not the same as meeting in person. And increasingly, volunteers – the EC and others – are taking active roles in the operation of The Society. All of this is true at a time when the Society is going through a period of dynamic change.

With all of this in mind, I set out some goals for my leadership which I outlined at the Fall meeting. During my tenure as president I want:

- To assure that The Society is a good steward of the time and talents available in the EC;
- To empower EC members to do their jobs as the visionaries and decision makers of the organization, being proactive instead of re-active whenever possible, and to be articulate ambassadors and spokespersons for The Society;
- To set a tone where the work of the EC is done faithfully in an environment of transparency;
- To assure EC members that they and their work are appreciated, so that they feel that their time is well spent.

That is not to say that we have not been doing these things in the past, but it is my goal to focus on them in the future. I presented these goals to the EC and, knowing that I cannot accomplish them alone, I asked the EC for their help, both in realizing these goals and in keeping me on track in accomplishing them.

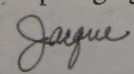
You might wonder why I would invest so much energy and thought in the creative operation of this organization. I had a collection of hymn texts published in 2014. In this organization that is not unusual – there is a healthy number of writers and composers who have had texts and tunes published. But from where I sit – viewing myself as an unlikely candidate to be writing hymn texts and having them published – this seemed pretty extraordinary.

I give the people of The Hymn Society full credit for the fact that my work was published. I didn't even know that I would be writing hymn texts when I landed at my first conference. But I arrived and was welcomed. I attended sectionals and plenaries. I lunched with strangers who quickly became friends. And I sang. Then I went home and began to write. Seasoned writers have generously shared their time and talents with me. I have come in contact with publishers and worship leaders. At no time did anyone say "What are your qualifications?"

Recently a composer said to me that he had noted a particular metaphor that I used in one of my texts and had been praying about it. The idea that someone had been talking to God about something I had written completely took my breath away. I was once again reminded that hymns are integral to faith formation and that textwriting is an enormous and humbling responsibility. If I can give back of my time, talents and financial resources to an organization where the next hymnpoet can learn the craft at the feet of the masters, then that is an organization where I want to throw my energy and administrative skills.

I look forward to meeting those of you I have not met and I hope to see all of you in New Orleans.

Keep singing!


Jacque Jones, President

RESEARCH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

LIM SWEE HONG

In the last issue, I wrote about sustaining the legacy of traditional hymnody as well as extending the boundaries of congregational song practice in the present. To that end, the scope for the Emerging Scholars Forum has been fine-tuned to strengthen the latter.

The Emerging Scholars Forum (ESF) is a distinctive offering within the annual Hymn Society conference. Unlike our conference sectionals, the ESF seeks to nurture and offer graduate students and those who have recently graduated the opportunity to showcase their research findings. It is intentionally academic in outlook and purpose. It is one event within the Annual Conference where we purposefully seek to stretch the boundary of congregational song in its theology, practice, philosophy, history and other contextual markers. Embedded within the Annual Conference, the ESF is a platform that offers the selected presenters the unique opportunity to have their work scrutinized by a diverse group of people including seasoned scholars, graduate students, and practitioners who have an interest in learning what is at the forefront of congregational song research.

To that end, applicants prepare an abstract which is then reviewed by a panel of four adjudicators chaired by the Director of Research. The best three proposals are selected. The presenters are then invited to formally present their findings at the Forum. Thereafter, one of them is awarded with the prize that recognizes his or her contribution to furthering research in congregational song.

This year, the ESF will be guided by the research parameters of Practice, Philosophy (Theology), History, and/or Context of congregational song. We encourage submissions along these lines. We see successful abstracts as those that offer critical, well-informed, thoughtful research with clear methodology that builds on inter-disciplinary approaches.

Aside from showcasing the important work of emerging scholars, the ESF provides an opportunity for these scholars to develop academic paper presentation skills in a safe and encouraging environment. It is an avenue to nurture the next generation of researchers and scholars. If you are an educator who has identified suitable students in the field of congregational song, consider encouraging them to attend the Conference and to participate in this forum. If you are a graduate student, do see this forum as an opportunity to gain experience in doing academic conference-level presentations with the possibility of being published in a peer-reviewed journal.

To that end, I look forward to receiving your application and meeting you at the Forum.

Be seeing y'all in New Orleans!

Lim Swee Hong (林瑞峰)

Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto
CANADA

Jazz, Jambalaya, and Jubilee in New Orleans: The Unique Culture that Birthed a Unique Music

BY PAUL R. POWELL

When The Hymn Society gathers in New Orleans for its 2015 Annual Conference attendees will be introduced to a culture unlike any other in the United States and Canada, the culture that gave birth to jazz. What is it about New Orleans culture that spawned jazz? This article is intended not as a travel guide but rather as a descriptive survey of this melting pot of cultures, foods, and music “Down by the Riverside.”

Founded in 1718, New Orleans was a melting pot of cultures for nearly a century before becoming part of the United States in 1806. French, Spanish, African, and many other national, ethnic, and racial groups settled in the area creating a Creole culture. Early English residents were not allowed to live in the French Quarter and so settled in the Garden District. Another section of the city is still referred to as “the American sector” where immigrants from America settled before Louisiana became a state in 1812. Germans came to farm the surrounding areas for the French. Native American peoples and Africans, both slave and free, became a formative part of the cultural milieu. By 1840, with a population exceeding 100,000, New Orleans had become the fourth-largest and one of the wealthiest cities in America. There were four resident opera companies, a professional orchestra, professional theatre groups, and a budding musical culture unrivaled in the rest of the country.

As a French, and later, Spanish colony, New Orleans was from the beginning a Catholic city. A parish was established in 1720 and there has been a church on the present site of St. Louis Cathedral since 1727. Hurricanes and fires were unkind to the early buildings, but in 1789 a new building was begun which, with alterations, is the current Basilica-Cathedral of St. Louis, King of France. The first bishop of the diocese arrived in 1795. The Archdiocese of New Orleans is the second oldest in continuous existence in the United States. St. Augustine is the oldest African American Catholic Church in the country and New Orleans is believed to have more African American Catholics than any other city.

King Louis XV sent Ursuline nuns to New Orleans in 1726 to provide health care for the poor and education for young girls. The Ursuline Academy dates from 1727

and claims to be the oldest continuously-existing school in the United States. The Old Ursuline Convent in the French Quarter is the oldest extant structure in the Mississippi River Valley. Africans were taught to read and write, unlike in other areas of the South. New Orleans is home to Xavier University, the only African American Catholic university in the United States, as well as to two other Catholic colleges, Loyola University and Our Lady of Holy Cross College, and two other historically black universities, Dillard and Southern New Orleans. Tulane, the University of New Orleans, Notre Dame Seminary, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary round out the higher education institutions.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jesuits came to Louisiana to evangelize the Native Americans. They founded St. Charles College at Grand Coteau (near Lafayette) and later Loyola University New Orleans, host site for the 2015 Hymn Society conference. Loyola is the only one of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States that has a full college of music.

Because the city was Catholic, Christians of other traditions were late arriving in the city. Small groups of Episcopalians and Presbyterians founded Christ Church Cathedral, Episcopal in 1805 and First Presbyterian in 1818. Methodists arrived in the 1820s; German Lutherans, Evangelicals, and Baptists came in the 1840s. Scottish Presbyterians and Irish Catholics came in large numbers soon after.

French, Spanish, and German were heard along with Latin and English in the early churches. Central/St. Matthew United Church of Christ continues to conduct a monthly service in German. Sicilians began arriving in large numbers around the 1890s, adding yet another Mediterranean Catholic musical influence. Meanwhile many other ethnic groups settled in New Orleans and today there are churches of virtually every denomination. Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean Christians are well represented in the city. New Orleans is home to three cathedrals: St. Louis (Catholic), Christ Church (Episcopal), and Holy Trinity (Greek Orthodox) which is the oldest in the western hemisphere.

Jews started trickling into New Orleans in the mid-1700s and after efforts by France and Spain to exclude

Jews they began to come to New Orleans in sufficient numbers to establish businesses and synagogues. Touro Synagogue is ninth oldest in the United States, and Temple Sinai, site of our Tuesday evening festival, is the largest Jewish congregation as well as the oldest Reform congregation in Louisiana.

Persons of African heritage have played a very significant role in the cultural, religious, and musical heritage of the city. Regrettably, New Orleans was an active center of slave trading. Most of the slaves were destined for plantations along the Mississippi River and throughout the South, but others remained in New Orleans. Under Spanish rule, slaves were granted the ability to purchase their freedom. Under both French and Spanish rule Africans had more freedoms than anywhere else in the South. In fact, there was a three-part racial system comprised of whites, slaves, and free persons of color. Free persons of color made up about 33% of those of African descent and 19% of the overall population of New Orleans at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. French- and Spanish-speaking people of color from the Caribbean islands, particularly those fleeing uprisings in Santo Domingo, escaped to New Orleans where there was already a culture similar to their own. Canary Islanders (Islenos) added to the mix.

The official recognition of a class of free people who were primarily mixed race gave New Orleans a cultural mix unlike any other area of the United States. This group of people in turn exerted great influence on the development of musical styles, some of which will be utilized in hymn festivals during our 2015 Conference. Not only were most of the free persons of color of mixed race, often French or Spanish and African, but many of the working class neighborhoods were mixed, with whites, blacks, and Creoles living and working side by side. Quite naturally, this mixed culture in close proximity strongly influenced the development of foods such as gumbo and jambalaya, and musical styles such as jazz, all perfect metaphors for the mixed culture.

Readers may wonder what the difference between Creole and Cajun is. In general *Creole* refers to the French-speaking colonials (and their descendants) who were in Louisiana before it became a state, regardless of race or racial mix. *Cajun* is a corruption of "Acadian" and refers to the French settlers, driven out of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island by the English, who eventually migrated to the bayous and prairies of southwest Louisiana. In terms of foods, chicken and pork predominate in Cajun cuisine and seafood in Creole. Gumbo and jambalaya are common to both, but Creoles use more seafood and Cajuns more chicken and sausage. Jambalaya is, in fact, similar to Spanish paella and gumbo has its roots in African cuisine, especially its use of okra. Seasonings such as bay leaves and filé (powdered sassafras leaves) are contributions from Native Americans. Cajun cooking is robust and sometimes spicy, whereas Creole cuisine depends more on sauces and subtle seasonings.

In Cajun country when large groups gather for celebrations, they often make a community gumbo or

jambalaya from ingredients, even leftovers, contributed by members of the community; in earlier times these were often cooked in large wash pots. The popular dish of red beans and rice harkens to a time when clothes were washed on Mondays in huge pots over open fires and it was convenient to have a pot of red beans cooking over the same fires. Local crops of rice, sugar cane, and citrus provided ingredients for many popular dishes. Leftovers were incorporated not only into gumbo and jambalaya, but into dishes such as *calas*, a fried rice cake made with eggs, sugar, and flour, often sold in the streets by slave or Creole women. Leftover French bread was used in bread pudding or *pain perdu*, similar to French toast. Coffee shops serving strong, chicory coffee with heated milk and beignets (square, puffy doughnuts) have been around since Café Du Monde was established in 1862. This coffee shop has been open 24 hours a day every day since, except during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. That difficult time will be commemorated in our Sunday evening hymn festival.

New Orleans's architecture is also a mix of styles from various cultures. The French Quarter or Vieux Carré ("Old Quarter") is laid out in the style of a French city with buildings fronting street-side with courtyards in the rear. Shops were on the ground floor with living quarters above and double-decker slave quarters at the rear of the small courtyards. The famous wrought-iron balconies were contributed by the Spanish. Outside the Old Quarter, homes were built in a Caribbean style (one room opening into another without halls or even doorways), or shotgun style (a hallway running the length of the house on one side with rooms along the other) so that theoretically a gunshot fired at the front door might pass all the way through the house without striking anything. Sometimes these homes were built double (called duplexes elsewhere), some with a second story to the rear called a camelback. In the English Garden District houses tended to be similar to the grand homes found in London or on the plantations.

Musically, the French, Spanish, Germans, Jews, and later the Italians brought with them a love for operatic and symphonic music. Africans and Native Americans contributed folk styles that incorporated drumming and dancing. The French laissez-faire attitude encouraged a mixing of musical styles just as it had in other areas of life. Africans were allowed to gather in Congo Square on Sundays to sing and dance and otherwise socialize free of restrictions. Drumming was a big part of these gatherings. Africans also took up orchestral instruments and piano, developing their own style of music. New Orleans had many bars and bawdy places that provided venues for this new style of music, and it is said that jazz was actually born in the bordellos of Storyville, a legalized red-light district adjacent to the French Quarter. At the same time, whites were developing a musical style called Dixieland jazz that was associated with bars and clubs. The jump from these associations to using jazz in church services was a long one. It is important to note that as these


composers and performers incorporated sacred tunes and texts into their repertoire, they were in fact carrying the gospel into public life. Several churches and synagogues in the local area have jazz services at least annually. A few local churches use light jazz accompaniment rather than organ or piano for singing, either with traditional or contemporary texts.

Spirituals arose in the rural south, but since New Orleans was Catholic, including the early Africans, spirituals did not come into general use until after the Civil War when former slaves moved from the country into the city. Black gospel music developed from the spirituals and the gospel songs that had become a part of congregational singing in the rural white Baptist and Methodist churches where slaves were members before emancipation. These gospel songs had their origins with the great evangelists and gospel singers of England and America. The Africans related very well to the themes of anticipated freedom and justice in the Promised Land, if not on earth, that were so much a part of these early gospel songs. Furthermore, there was a deep affinity of Africans with the Jews and Native Americans who had experienced slavery and discrimination as well. These themes and affinities are at the root of nearly all styles of African American music, most especially jazz, in which freedom of expression and group improvisation are key elements.

It may seem strange to say, but this old Creole city with its reputation for bawdy entertainment is a very religious city. Virtually every season of the year is dominated by religious celebrations, regardless of how irreligious they may seem. Jazz funerals, gospel concerts, Mardi Gras, and dozens of festivals are in some ways related to this Creole Catholic mentality. Virtually all schools and colleges, public or private, have gospel choirs. Twelfth Night (Epiphany) celebrations begin the carnival season which ends on Mardi Gras day, the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. King cake is served throughout Carnival and parades are held for several days in the weeks before Mardi Gras. Italian Catholics put together elaborate St. Joseph altars and Irish Catholics host the St. Patrick's Day parade, both of which involve distribution of food to the poor. Germans host Oktoberfest, and Greeks have an annual festival at Holy Trinity Cathedral. There are blessings of the fleet for shrimpers, many of whom are Vietnamese Catholics. In many of these events, the texts and tunes of spirituals and gospel music have moved from the churches into the public arena.

These brief descriptions of the connections between cultural developments and musical styles of congregational singing to be experienced during the hymn festivals at next summer's conference will give attendees a basic understanding of this unique city and its musical contributions to congregational singing. Our theme "Somebody's Callin' My Name: Jazz, Jambalaya, and Jubilee" is taken from Wyatt Tee Walker's *Somebody's Calling My Name: Black Sacred Music and Social Change* (Judson, 1982), a wonderful introduction to black sacred music, as are Horace Boyer's *The Golden Age of Gospel* (University of Illinois, 2000), James Abingdon's *Let Mt. Zion Rejoice: Music in the African American Church* (Judson, 2001), and Melva Costen's *In Spirit and In Truth: the Music of African American Worship* (Westminster John Knox, 2004). Readers can find a wealth of studies on jazz, including articles on using jazz in church music by member Dan Damon who will be the leader for our Monday evening jazz festival (see the article "Jazz and congregational song, USA" in *Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*; Damon's "From German Chorale to Jazz Waltz," *THE HYMN* 61:2 [Spring 2010], 42-45; and Ed Doemland's "A Consistent Jazz-Based Harmonization of a Classic Tune," *THE HYMN* 63:2 [Spring 2012], 44-47).

Plenary speaker Miguel de la Torre's *Reading the Bible from the Margins* (Orbis, 2002) and speaker John Baron's *Music in Jewish History and Culture* (Harmonie Park, 2006) are highly recommended. Plenary speaker Roy L. Belfield, Jr., an educator, church musician, composer, and arranger will co-lead the Wednesday evening spirituals/gospel festival with Melva Costen. Mark Miller, co-leader with Brian Hehn of the closing jubilee festival, is an educator, organist, church musician, and outstanding leader of congregational singing. Dr. Carlton R. (Sam) Young, FHS, will lead a plenary on the *Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology* for which he served as United States editor. These speakers and festival leaders bring a wealth of scholarship and practice to our conference.

So, come for the culture, come for the food, come for the singing, or come for the speakers. But we hope *all ya'll* will "be in that number when the saints go marching in" to New Orleans, July 12-16, 2015. *Laissez les bon temps rouler!* 

Paul R. Powell, Ph.D., FHS, chair of the planning committee for the New Orleans conference, is a retired librarian, church musician, and pastor living in New Orleans. He served The Hymn Society for six years as Director of Research and co-edited with Mary Louise Van Dyke the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology* on CD-ROM. His doctoral dissertation at Drew University was a study of the influence of Louis F. Benson and the 1895 Presbyterian hymnal on American hymnody.

The Revolution and the Reign of God: Cuban Hymnody Gives Voice to a Distinctly Liberative Theology¹

BY BECCA WHITLA

Cuba, the largest island in the Caribbean Sea, was one of the earliest locations of European contact with the Americas with the arrival of Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus) in 1492 and of Bartolomé de las Casas in 1502 (who was subsequently ordained a Catholic priest on the island in 1513). From these earliest days of colonization, Cuba developed as a religiously diverse society: the initial intermingling between Spanish Catholicism and indigenous practices was followed by the proliferation of African traditions and resulting syncretic practices with the arrival of slaves in the sixteenth century. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the arrival of Protestant missionaries, followed by the arrival of European Jews in the twentieth century.² In this cultural context of relative tolerance and diversity, where 96.5% of the population professed a belief in God,³ the Triumph of the Revolution occurred in 1959, bringing about an abrupt upheaval as the revolutionary 26th of July Movement lead by Fidel Castro toppled the corrupt dictatorship of President Fulgencio Batista and strove to establish a more just society along socialist lines.

Despite the initial years of struggle for Cuban churches brought about by the 1959 Revolution, those in the 'remnant church'⁴ began to engage their new reality by articulating a new mission and theology. This new vision was expressed in an outpouring of autochthonous⁵ Cuban hymnody in the early 1980s in a creative space fostered by Cuban ecumenical movements and enlivened by the *Nueva Trova* ("New Ballad") song movement and the widespread influence of Vatican II. The (post) revolutionary hymnody of this era embodied a deeply contextual and liberative theology⁶ based on a vision of society in which the values of the gospel were understood to have common ground with the goals of the Revolution. Though the unambiguously optimistic faith in the capacity of the Revolution to enact such a vision was later distrusted, congregational hymns of this era became a significant locus for this particular contextual narrative, as well as a pneumatological act in which a Cuban liberative theology of hope could be expressed with Cuban poetry set to Cuban music.

This article will examine the congregational hymns of two Protestant hymnwriters from this time period—Heber Romero Armas and Clara Luz Ajo—who particularly exemplify this distinctly Cuban liberative theology. In their hymns, the language of revolutionary hope was translated into a vision of the immanent Reign of God in which the people were called to work with God in constructing the Reign. I will also explore the commonalities between this Cuban liberative theology and liberation theologies which were simultaneously erupting across Latin America.

In the conclusion—to be published in the next edition of *THE HYMN*—the impact of this hymnody beyond the circles of its genesis will be analyzed—how have societal and ecclesial trends and tensions influenced the reach of this era's Cuban hymnody? In addition, emerging directions will be described which point towards creative possibilities for the future of Cuban hymnody and illuminate similar trends outside Cuba as well as potentially promising responses to them.

Cuban Churches after 1959

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?
(Psalm 137:4)

Protestants were taught to be anti-Catholic and anti-communist. The economic crisis of the 1930s surprised us; with no program of social action we were made to understand that our land and our industries were in foreign hands and that economic solutions depended on a drastic change. Political dictators came and went and we were in our churches listening to words of resignation, singing hymns with poor music and worse theology. . . .⁷

Prior to 1959, most Protestant churches in Cuba, having been founded by U.S. missionaries in the late nineteenth century, were culturally and politically linked to U.S. interests. They incorporated U.S. models of theology, liturgy (including hymnody), and ecclesiology. Then, with the triumph of the Revolution in 1959 and the consequent rupture by the United States of its relationship with Cuba, ties between Cuban Protestant churches and their U.S. founders were disrupted. These historic ties between the U.S. expansionist mandate and

the establishment of Protestant churches contributed to an early uneasy and increasingly hostile relationship between these religious communities and the Revolutionary government. A massive exodus of missionaries and church workers ensued. Public criticisms and even attempts to subvert the agenda of the Revolution from within religious communities further fuelled the government's inclination to regard churches and their projects with suspicion and distrust.⁸ The Revolutionary Government, for its part, nationalized all schools and community organizations that had been run by the churches and both the rhetoric of the government and its actions became increasingly hostile towards the churches.⁹

The government's hostility toward the churches, especially once it declared itself officially atheist as a Marxist-Leninist government in 1961, combined with the diminishment of the churches that were left—the 'remnant church'—to create an identity crisis of extreme proportions that threatened the very future of the churches. Speaking of the early days of the Revolution, Elisabeth González recalls that "it was a difficult time to be a Christian. The churches were disoriented. There were no pastors, no young people, [and] no exchange with the outside world."¹⁰ Cuban Christians found themselves in a strange land—their own transformed island. Many turned inwards, waiting for the failure of the revolutionary process and a return to old ways. But others followed a new path which meant "risking everything and throwing yourself in the name of the Lord into the adventure of living the new, trusting that God was in control and would not fail."¹¹ Those who chose to take this leap of faith, to "sing a new song unto the Lord" (Psalm 98), began to work together, especially in ecumenical settings, to discern the mission, theology, and cultural expression of the church in the new socialist context. Circumstances were ripe for the growth of an autochthonous Cuban hymnody that would respond to these new circumstances.

The Flowering of Cuban Hymnody

From the early days of the triumph of the Revolution in the 1960s, those Christians who were sympathetic to its goals saw in them an affinity with the message of the Gospel, "little by little recognizing common features between the new society that was being built and gospel values (above all those related to social justice and common well-being)."¹² Chief among these, especially in Protestant circles, were ecumenical organizations like the Student Christian Movement, the Ecumenical Council of Churches (the Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches) and the Evangelical Seminary of Matanzas.¹³ As early as 1965, theologian Sergio Arce Martínez began to wrestle with these questions in *The Mission of the Church in a Socialist Society* (*La misión de la Iglesia en una sociedad Socialista*).¹⁴ Emerging church leaders gradually began to discern a new mission for the church in revolutionary Cuba, seeking new relations between faith and culture from a vision of "mutual illumination."¹⁵

Meanwhile, hostile relations between the churches and the state slowly began to abate.¹⁶ By the time of the early 1980s, this easing helped to facilitate the ecumenical discernment processes of a new church leadership who wished to find common ground with the goals of the Revolution. Part of that process included the creation of a fertile space in which the emerging contextual theology of liberation, articulated by Arce as a "theology in revolution," could be expressed in hymns and songs, as well as in other ways.¹⁷ This flowering of Cuban hymnody, part of a broader movement towards liturgical renewal, was enhanced by two other significant cultural factors.

The first factor was the profound liturgical and theological impact of Vatican II in Cuba, as elsewhere.¹⁸ Its emphasis on liturgical renewal, the use of vernacular language and inculturation encouraged Cubans to express their faith in their own cultural and contextual terms with new texts and autochthonous music. Cuban Catholic hymn writer Perla (Perlita) Moré was an early example. Writing in the 1960s and 1970s, she contributed new mass settings which were widely used in Protestant circles as well. She also worked with her Protestant colleagues, including Lois Kroehler, who was an early Presbyterian church music leader.¹⁹

Vatican II and the subsequent conference at Medellín in 1968 were also influenced by—and had an impact on—the powerful movements of Latin American Liberation Theology that were simultaneously emerging in other parts of Latin America. Cuban theology, born out of the distinctly Cuban experience, had strong theological convergences with those movements as well as some differences which I will return to shortly.

The second factor was the widely appreciated influential and poetic expression of Cuban life and reality in the *Nueva Trova* tradition of singing, especially in the songs of Silvio Rodríguez.²⁰ The images in Rodríguez's songs paint a utopian vision in which hope, faith, and love have prominence.²¹ His songs rise out of "autochthonous cultural traditions . . . a genuine manifestation of popular song, attentive to historical context, in the particular expression of human beings belonging to a revolutionary epoch."²² Rodríguez had a significant influence in Cuba and throughout Latin America. For Christians, there was also a convergence between his spiritual, though not religious, utopian imagination and eschatological images.²³ For instance, in his song "*Venga la esperanza*," Rodríguez emphasizes the interwoven power of hope and love to overcome pain and disappointment. The final line reads: "*Venga la esperanza de cualquier color, verde, roja o negra, pero con amor*" (Come hope of whatever colour, green, red or black, but with love).²⁴

Of course, these contextual expressions in song – fostered in ecumenical discernment processes and nurtured by Vatican II and the *Nueva Trova* movement – were given voice through the gifts and work of particular people. Christian hymn writers like Romero and Ajo embodied these struggles in their art, expressing the "joys, the hopes, the burdens, and the struggles of the culture

of their people.”²⁵ They used traditional Cuban musical forms, melodies, and rhythms as the basic building blocks for the new hymnody. The power of musical production was given to the guitar, the *trés*,²⁶ the claves, and the human voice instead of the piano and the organ. They also lived the struggles of the church and society; held in themselves the tensions between the church and the government; and lived out their faith in dialogue with theologians, church leaders, and church members. Above all, they experienced the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives, writing songs as pneumatological acts that embodied their complex reality and gave voice to a contextual vision of liberation in which the Reign of God was articulated in the language of revolutionary hope.

Song as a Pneumatological Act

I was following an instinct, and above all, an enormous interior need to say and do something new. I am convinced, and I say it with reverential fear, that God in his plan and immense mercy, the Holy Spirit with his marvellous touch and freedom to choose whom he likes, and Jesus with his sweet solidaritous friendship . . . chose me for this, like he chose the fishermen on the shore of Galilee.²⁷

These pneumatological song acts²⁸ required an engagement from listeners and singers; it was not possible to remain neutral. According to Romero, it meant being “courageous (*valiente*) [in] accepting the challenge that was imposed on us, raising our faces, hearts and voices confronting those who underestimated us, proclaiming Christ and making known our condition as courageous Cuban Christians.”²⁹ It meant being courageous, not only in a revolutionary Cuban society where suspicion against the churches had prevailed, but also in the face of fear and denial within the churches of the new socialist reality. These new songs opened doors and allowed Christians to en flesh themselves in society, embodying revolutionary Christian hope in distinctly Cuban articulations. They also became an effective means to combat the anti-religious sentiment in society and the negative image of the church.³⁰

In 1980, Rev Carlos Camps asked Heber Romero, a member the Convención Evangélica de los Pinos Nuevos, a conservative Cuban denomination, to write a piece to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Rev Camps’ Presbyterian church in Santa Clara. The *Liturgia Criolla* was created, a collection of congregational songs still widely sung in Cuban churches in Protestant and Catholic circles alike.³¹ The *Liturgia Criolla* was printed in *Señales y Cantos del Reino—II Encuentro de la Nueva Canción Cristiana Revolucionario, Abril 23-25 de 1982*, a booklet of hymns that exemplifies the kind of musical festivals and encounters that were encouraged in the new ecumenical climate of theological hope and liturgical renewal. Speaking specifically about his own work, Romero says “I was inviting the people of God to celebrate with joy, forgetting the past and leaving behind melancholy for

times past, because God calls us to go forward.”³²

Similarly, when Episcopal Bishop Emilio Hernández Albalade asked Clarita Ajo to compose a Cuban Episcopal mass for the Episcopal synod of 1983, she said she was “inspired by the Holy Spirit and wrote it in a week”³³ with her then-husband Pedro Triana. Aware that the people would not recognize her lay authority in an Episcopal context, she told the bishop that “we need to practice and *you* need to tell them we’re going to do it.” Taking her cue, he made an announcement at the synod opening: “I have good news, we have a new Episcopal Mass and everyone is going to sing it!”³⁴

A Hopeful Theology in Revolution Emerges in Song

These pneumatologically inspired hymns, represented here in the works of Romero and Ajo, not only gave voice to a theology that was distinctly Cuban—a profoundly contextual vision of liberation in which the Reign of God was articulated in the language of revolutionary hope—they also resembled the theologies of liberation that had been simultaneously erupting all over Latin America. It is to these shared resonances as well as their particularly Cuban flavour that I now turn. These commonalities include: an assertion that divine disclosure occurs among the marginalised; an affirmation and celebration of the humanity of the people; and finally, the view that the people’s experience is a source of theology.³⁵

First, let us consider the fundamental principle that divine disclosure occurred (and occurs) first and foremost among the marginalised or excluded.³⁶ Elsewhere in Latin America, the incarnation of Jesus was said to have happened (and be happening) among the poor: God suffered with the poor in the form of Jesus crucified. In the Cuban context, those who sought common ground with revolutionary principles saw Cubans as workers already actively engaged in actually building the Reign of God through the revolutionary process; the Revolution was understood as a concrete, historically-situated expression of the Reign of God.³⁷ Because of this emphasis, Cuban theologian Sergio Arce articulated a “theology in revolution” rather than a “preferential option for the poor,” distinguishing the Cuban experience from other liberation theologies. Divine disclosure was understood to occur *in* Cuba, among the workers, and in the places where workers lived and worked. Jesus was connected to the land, to work, to the life of the people. In short, Jesus was with “the people” and the Revolution.

We see in Romero’s hymn texts a clear example of divine disclosure occurring among the marginalised in the Cuban countryside. For example, in stanza two of his “Credo”³⁸ divine disclosure among the people is emphasized: “because you have made/the suffering of the people your own suffering./You came among the poor/to form a simple kingdom.” In another of his hymn texts, “Al despuntar en la loma el día/On the hill at the dawning of the day,” it is rather the Cuban countryside which is

underscored as the locus for divine self-revelation. Stanza one begins by declaring that the “countryside is full of your glory” and ends with a re-affirmation of God among the people: “I see you here always in my life and in my being.” Stanza two emphasizes the physical location by highlighting specific Cuban images: a coffee plantation, life in the *corral* (stockyard), and the air mixed with the aroma of coffee and sweat. In stanza three, the word of God is heard (cooed) in the palm groves, like the song of a rooster or a thrush.³⁹ Describing his own compositional thinking, Romero writes:

The hymn “On the hill at the dawning of the day” is praising God for creation in the form in which it is manifested in the Cuban countryside specifically. This, so natural for Christians these days, was a challenge for the church in the 1980s. God was in Cuba, he had not gone to the USA and he had intentions for us here. This was a scandal.⁴⁰

Just as God was seen to be in Cuba and present among the workers, labour itself was asserted as a fitting tribute to God. For example in Ajo’s communion hymn, “Pan y vino /Bread and wine” from her *Misa Cubana*,⁴¹ she begins: “Bread and wine we bring to you,/and in them we put, Lord,/our work, our studies and our daily labour,/our joy and pains, our youth and our love.”⁴² This spiritual value of work is a strong point of theological convergence between Marxism and Christianity for Cuban theologian Sergio Arce. “The Christian,” he says, “has to assume a spiritual and positive attitude towards work; an attitude as positive and spiritual as the Marxist, even more so, because for the Christian it is not only a question of human spirituality but also to actualize the divine task.”⁴³

The connection between physical labour, spiritual work, and divine work which Arce articulates theologically is made explicit in Romero’s hymns as well. For instance his “Porque aquí tu vives,” also known as “Con alegría,” “gives thanks to God for having created sweat, and refers to daily physical work that serves the poor.”⁴⁴ Romero also draws a parallel between this physical work and the work of serving God by proclaiming the Gospel.⁴⁵

The second convergence between the Cuban liberative theology embodied in the hymns of Romero and Ajo and Latin American liberation theologies is an affirmation and celebration of the humanity of the people. Ajo’s entrance hymn from the *Misa Cubana*, “Aclamemos al Señor,” begins with an affirmation of the humanity of the workers and peasants, set in the concrete physical environment of their land: “When the sun opens his arms and the moon says goodbye;/when the worker and the peasant, start their new labour,/when in the green countryside, they sing like the mockingbird and the sparrow,/“God lives,” exclaims the earth, ‘let us praise the Lord.’”⁴⁶ Then, in stanza two the celebration of the people takes off with an imagined instrumentation that includes Cuban musical instruments as well as the tools of the worker: “Let us acclaim him with strings, with claves, maracas, and bongos./Let the machetes and the hoe acclaim him.”⁴⁷ This call to celebration was also what Romero hoped to

do in his *Cántale a Dios* by inviting Christians to “sing to God your laughter and your hope.”⁴⁸

The third theme in common with other Latin American liberation theologies is the affirmation of the particular experience of the people as a primary theological source.⁴⁹ In the hymns of Romero and Ajo, this emphasis on the experience of the people is amplified by the very Cuban-ness of the music itself. Not only does Ajo refer to Cuban instruments in the above entrance hymn, but she wrote each piece of music in the *Misa Cubana* with a different song type in mind: three were *son*, the others were *canción*, *bolero*, *contra-danza*, and a *pregón*.⁵⁰ Cuban song/dance forms are defined by region and incorporate various regional cultural mixtures (including African, Spanish, and French, among others) and corresponding distinct rhythms, tempi, styles, and instrumentation. Romero is also explicit about the use of particular song forms. He cites *son montuno*, *guaracha*, *chachachá*, *guajira*, *son contemporáneo*, *danzón*, and *guaguanco*, as just some examples of the many forms he uses for his hymns.⁵¹ Together the poetry and music of these hymns, embodied in specific Cuban song-dance forms, assert the daily lived experience of the people as a primary theological source.

In addition to these three commonalities between Cuban liberative theology and other Latin American liberation theologies, the hymns of Romero and Ajo also express an unmistakably Cuban perspective which specifically articulates the values held in common between the churches and socialist society. The question “Can I be a Christian and a socialist at the same time?”⁵² was being asked by a growing group of people, especially among the new leaders in ecumenical contexts. Many were answering ‘yes, and this is how.’

To repeat, the language of revolutionary hope was translated into a vision of the immanent Reign of God. Embodied theoretically in the revolutionary process, this ‘liberation’ signified the actualized Reign of God which occurred at a particular historic moment in which the people were called to walk with God in constructing the Reign. Clara Ajo, when describing her *Misa Cubana*, said, “The Misa is calling us to live the Gospel, to construct the reign of God, to struggle for a new world.”⁵³ The hope of this eschatological vision is palpable in the poetry and rhythm of her songs. For example, in the final song of her *Misa Cubana*, Clara Ajo expresses this vision: “At the end of the great fiesta, the fiesta of friendship,/let us leave for the camino, to serve and love./Let us leave to meet you, to struggle/so that your Reign of justice and peace will come.”⁵⁴

This Cuban theology of revolutionary hope emphasizes the Reign of God as something that is happening *now*, the new world being built *by* the people *with* God. In other parts of Latin America, Catholic liberation theologians like Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo, Jon Sobrino, and Leonardo Boff, as well as Protestant Rubem Alves, among others, were being criticized, disciplined, or silenced by ecclesial and state institutions for borrowing tools of social analysis from Marxism. In some extreme

cases, liberation-theology-inspired church activists were persecuted or assassinated, most notably Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 24, 1980. In Cuba, theologian Sergio Arce and hymn writers like Heber Romero and Clara Ajo could embrace such a relationship between ideology and theology: these new hymns articulated the points of convergence between the ideals of the Revolution and the values of the Gospel. It was a liberative, committed, contextual theology rooted in the lives of the people and a cultural *locus* in which Cuban reality was lifted up. In an intentionally contextual embodiment of the people's experience, hymn writers like Romero and Ajo were creating a critical space in which the people could

claim their own experience, knowledge, and agency as a theological source and as part of the liberative process in a socialist society.

In the next issue of *THE HYMN*, I will explore the impact of this hymnody. I also will inquire how the spirit of liturgical—as well as ecclesial—renewal which was exemplified could be fostered once again in the very different present-day Cuban reality.

Song Texts

With thanks to Heber Romero and Clara Ajo for sharing their texts.

Credo

texto y música, Heber Romero

1. Creemos en ti o padre,
santo, eterno y poderoso,
Pue sabemos cuan hermoso
es tu amor incomparable.
2. Puesto que has hecho tuyo
el sufrimiento de los hombres,
Has venido y entre pobres
formas un reino sencillo.
3. Tu iglesia es hoy mas santa,
santo el pan que está en tu mesa,
Pues trabajo sin sileza a
tu cuerpo representa.
4. El espíritu santo
nos da vida nos da aliento.
Su justicia experimento
de esperanza es nuestro canto.

Translation, Becca Whitla

1. We believe in you, O Father,
holy, eternal, and powerful,
And we know the beauty
of your incomparable love.
2. Because you have made
the suffering of the people your own suffering,
You came among the poor
to form a simple kingdom.
3. Your church is more holy today
and holy is the bread on your table,
Because work without vileness
represents your body.
4. The Holy Spirit
gives us life and nourishment.
Its expression of justice
is the hope of our song.

Con alegría – With joy
texto y música, Heber Romero
from *El Himnario Presbiteriano*,
(Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999)

1. Con alegría te queremos loar,
a ti venimos hoy con gozo a cantar.
Tus mandamientos cumplimos con amor,
y nuestras vidas te entregamos, Señor.
Para los pobres y perdidos salvar
por tu Palabra vamos a trabajar

Estrillo: Y te cantamos porque aquí tú vives
nos has salvado, nos has hecho libres.

2. Qué más pudiéramos pedirte Señor?
Nos diste manos y creaste el sudor;
te tegocijas con tu pueblo al labrar
la dura tierra, y a la llenas de pan;
y pones ánimo en el corazón
de gozo eterno por la salvación.

3. Nos alegramos de tu visitación,
como el rocío a nuestras manos llegó;
formaste en gloria nuestra comunidad,
nos bautizaste con a more y verdad;
y en nuestros labios hay un himno también
que te proclama, por los siglos. Amén.

Translation, Becca Whitla

1. We want to praise you with joy,
we come today to sing with delight.
We fulfill your commandments with love,
and give our lives to you, Lord.
To save the poor and the lost,
for your Word, we will work!

Refrain: We sing to you because you live here,
you saved us, you made us free.

2. What more could we ask from you Lord?
You gave us hands and created sweat;
You work with your people
on the hard earth, that is filled with bread,
and you put life into our hearts,
with the eternal joy of your salvation.

3. We're joyful with your visit,
like the dew that came to our hands;
You formed our community in your glory
and baptized us in love and truth.
On our lips is a hymn that will also
proclaim you for centuries. Amen.

Excerpts from *Misa Cubana*
texto y música, Clara Ajo y Pedro Tirana

Canto de Entrada. Aclamemos al Señor

Cuando el sol abre sus brazos, y la luna dice adiós;
Cuando obrero y campesino, comienzan su nueva
labor;
Cuando en la verde campiña, cantan sinsonte y
gorrión:
//‘Viva Dios,’ la tierra exclama, ‘aclamemos al
Señor.’//

Aclamémosle con cuerdas, con clave, maraca y bongó;
Que le canten los machetes, que le aclame el azadón;
Y que le cante el querube, que el grito a la vida dio:
//‘Viva Dios,’ la tierra exclama, ‘aclamemos al
Señor.’//

Aclamemos y cantemos, con nuestra diaria labor;
En el servicio a los hombres, con nuestras obras de
amor.
Vamos todos de la mano y cantemos al Señor:
//‘Viva Dios,’ la tierra exclama, ‘aclamemos al
Señor.’//

Translation, Becca Whitla

Entrance Song. Let us sing to the Lord

When the sun opens his arms and the moon says
goodbye;
When the worker and the peasant start their new
labour,
When in the green countryside, the mockingbird
and the sparrow sing,
‘God lives,’ exclaims the earth, ‘let us praise the Lord.’

Let us acclaim him with strings, with claves, maracas
and bongos.

Let the machetes and the hoe acclaim him;
Let the cherub sing out, with the cry of life:
‘God lives,’ exclaims the earth, ‘let us praise the Lord.’

Let us acclaim and sing, with our daily work;
In the service of all, with our work of love.
Let us go hand in hand and sing to the Lord:
‘God lives,’ exclaims the earth, ‘let us praise the Lord.’

1

Pan y Vino

Pan y vino te traemos, y en ellos van buen Señor,
El trabajo, los estudios y nuestra diaria labor:
//La alegría y los dolores, la juventud y el amor.//

Coro: //Pan y vino con amor ante tu mesa traemos,
Pan y vino te ofrecemos, frutos de nuestra labor.//

Pan y vino te entregamos, y en ellos van buen Señor,
Nuestra Patria, nuestra tierra, de café y cañaveral,
//que tu no olvidas y cuidas y guardas de todo
mal.//

Pan y vino hoy presentamos, vaya en ellos nuestro
Dios,
El mundo que tu creaste, que sufre pena y dolor,
//y aquellos que están luchando por crear un mundo
mejor.//

Translation

Bread and Wine

Bread and wine we bring to you,
and in them we put, good Lord,
Our work, our studies, and our daily labour,
Our joy and pains, our youth and our love.

Chorus: //Bread and wine, lovingly we bring to
your table,
Bread and wine we offer, fruit of our labour.//

Bread and wine we give to you,
and in them we put, good Lord,
Our country, our land, coffee and sugar cane fields,
//So that you won't forget us and
will guard us and keep us from evil.//

Bread and wine we present to you,
and in them we put, good Lord,
The world you created, which suffers grief and pain,
//and those who are struggling to create a better
world.//

Canto de Salida: Al terminar la gran fiesta

Al terminar la gran fiesta, la fiesta de la amistad,
Salimos hacia el camino, para servir y amar,
Salimos para encontrarte, salimos para luchar
Para que venga Tu Reino de justicia y de paz.

Coro: //Vamos de la mano, vamos a cantar,
vámonos alegres, vámonos a amar.//

Al terminar la gran fiesta, la fiesta de la unidad,
Formemos una gran ronda, con toda la humanidad,
Para que todos los hombres, como hermanos
marchen ya,
Para que con alegría podamos ya trabajar.

A los hombres nos envías, a ser luz y a ser sal
Y si queremos servirte, sirviendo al mundo será,
Jesucristo del camino, Jesús del vino y el pan,
De la fabrica del surco del campo y de la ciudad.

Translation

Sending Song

At the end of the great fiesta, the fiesta of friendship,
Let us leave for the camino, to serve and love.
Let us leave to meet you, to struggle
So that your Reign of justice and peace will come.

Chorus: //Let us go hand in hand, singing,
celebrating, with love.//

After the grand fiesta, the fiesta of unity,
Let us form a great circle, with all humanity,
So that all people can march as brothers (and sisters),
So that we can work with happiness.

You sent us to be light and salt.
And if we want to serve you, we must serve the
world,
Jesus Christ, the way, Jesus, the wine and bread,
(Jesus) of the factory, the field, and the city.

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Notes

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²Margaret E. Crahan, "Executive Summary" from *Religion, Culture, and Society: The Case of Cuba—Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas #9 A Conference Report* (Washington, D.C., 2003), x.

³Marcos Antonio Ramos, "Cincuenta Años de Revolución: La Religión en Cuba" in *Protestantismo en Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial Caminos, 2011), 113. Drawing on the United States Department of State, 2010 *Report on International Religious Freedom—Cuba*, Lisa Reynolds Wolfe notes: the Roman Catholic Church estimates that 60% of the current population is Catholic; 5% of the population is Protestant; and as much as 80% of the population engage in some West African religious practices. See <http://www.havanaproject.com/2011/09/a-snapshot-of-religion-in-cuba-today/>, accessed January 6, 2014.

⁴Ortega, interview, March 2, 2012. As many as 80% of Christian leaders (both Catholic and Protestant) left Cuba in the wake of the Revolution. Those who stayed referred to the Cuban Church of this time as the 'remnant church'.

⁵I use *autochthonous* as distinct from *indigenous* which in my own Canadian context is understood to refer specifically to Canada's First Nations peoples. Here, *autochthonous* refers to the cultural identity of the Cuban people, recognizing that Cuban identity itself is the result of a mix of cultures and ethnicities. Also, according to Dr. Tércio Bretanha Junker, *autochthonous* is commonly used in Latin America in both Spanish and Portuguese in this way rendering it appropriate for this paper. *Culture and Theology* seminar group, North American Academy of Liturgy meeting, January 5, 2014.

⁶This distinction from liberation theology will be discussed in the section on "A Hopeful Theology in Revolution Emerges in Song" below.

⁷Rafael Cepeda, "Análisis histórico de la relación Iglesia-Revolución" in *Vivir el Evangelio: Reflexiones y experiencias* (La Habana: Editorial Caminos, 2003), 100.

⁸See Crahan, x.

⁹See Ramos, 121-123, for details. The increasingly tight control over and discrimination against Christian groups, especially some denominations, occurred within the larger societal context where associative organizations were regarded with suspicion and eventually prohibited by law.

¹⁰González, interview, February 1, 2012.

¹¹Romero, email interview, March 29, 2012.

¹²Amos López Rubio, *Propuestas Pastorales de Inculturación Litúrgica para La Fraternidad de Iglesias Bautistas de Cuba*, Tesis de Licenciatura en Teología (Seminario Evangelico de Matanzas, November 2001), 26, translation mine.

¹³Based on the interviews with Ajo, González, and Ortega, February-March, 2012.

¹⁴Ramos, 121.

¹⁵López, 2001, 26, translation mine.

¹⁶International pressure contributed to a lessening of government discrimination against believers. The frequency and levels of anti-religious and atheistic propaganda decreased and religious activities were regulated. In 1976 the constitution was amended to permit freedom of conscience. See Ramos, 126. In 1992, the government became non-confessional which permitted further religious freedom.

¹⁷See Sergio Arce, "Teología en revolución" in *La misión de la Iglesia en una sociedad Socialista* (La Habana: Editorial Caminos, 2004), 51-69.

¹⁸Daniel Montoya Rosales, "The Influence of the Missionary Heritage on Liturgical Forms" in *International Review of Mission* 74, no 295 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1985), 374.

¹⁹Lois Kroehler was an important figure in church music circles in the early days of the Revolution and beyond. When the Revolution triumphed,

she chose to stay in Cuba and not return to her native United States. She translated many texts, wrote new hymn texts, and began to write new texts and tunes. She promoted the use of guitar in worship and studied guitar with Perla Moré, according to Nelson Dávila (interview, March 15, 2012). She also worked for the Department of Renewal in the Cuban Ecumenical Council of Churches, edited the ecumenical hymnal *Toda la Iglesia Canta*, (1989), and taught at the Seminario Evangelico de Teología.

²⁰Ortega, interview.

²¹Ary Fernández Alban, *Una Aproximación Teológica a la Canción de Silvio Rodríguez*, Tesis de Licenciatura en Teología, (Seminario Evangelico de Teología de Matanzas, Mayo 1999)

²²Fernández, 10, translation mine.

²³Fernández, Introduction.

²⁴<http://www.quedelettras.com/letra-cancion-venga-la-esperanza-bajar-26694/disco-silvio-rodriguez-en-chile/silvio-rodriguez-venga-la-esperanza.html>, accessed May 24, 2013.

²⁵López, 2001, 26.

²⁶The *trés cubano* is a six-string guitar-like instrument with three pairs of strings that sound the same note.

²⁷Romero, email interview, translation mine.

²⁸The idea of song as a pneumatological act arose from a conversation with Néstor Medina in the fall of 2011.

²⁹Romero, email interview.

³⁰Ortega, interview.

³¹Romero, email interview. Ofelia Ortega says that the *Liturgia Criolla* was sung for the first visit of Pope John Paul II in 1998.

³²Romero, email interview.

³³Ajo, interview, March 6, 2012.

³⁴Ajo, interview.

³⁵The theological threads in Latin American Liberation Theologies enumerated here were developed in studies with Néstor Medina: *Liberation and Postcolonial-Decolonial Theologies* (Emmanuel College, University of Toronto, EMT 3620, Fall 2011)

³⁶There is considerable debate about this terminology from a variety of liberation perspectives. For example, feminist Latin American liberation theologians have suggested using "excluded" to encompass other forms of oppression like sexism and racism. See Elsa Tamez "Teología de la Liberación" in *Quedan Dios y los Pobres: Textos Sobre la Teología de la Liberación*, ed. Alejandro Dausá, (La Habana: Centro Memorial Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr., 2008), 63.

³⁷Conversation with Reinerio Arce, Rector of the Seminario Evangelico de Teología de Matanzas (SET), and son of Sergio Arce, April 3, 2012.

³⁸Heber Romero, "Credo" from the *Liturgia Criolla*, 1980. See "Song Texts" below.

³⁹Heber Romero "Al despintar en la loma el día" from *El Himnario Presbiteriano* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999), #3.

⁴⁰Romero, email interview, translation mine.

⁴¹The *Misa Cubana* was written by Clara Ajo and her then husband Pedro Triana. See "Song Texts" below.

⁴²Clara Ajo, "Pan y Vino" from *Misa Cubana*, electronic copy from the author. See "Song Texts" below.

⁴³Sergio Arce, 2004, 33, translation mine.

⁴⁴Romero, email interview, translation mine.

⁴⁵Romero, email interview.

⁴⁶Clara Ajo, "Aclamemos al Señor" from *Misa Cubana*, electronic copy from the author. See "Song Texts" below.

⁴⁷Ajo, "Aclamemos al Señor."

⁴⁸Romero, email interview, translation mine.

⁴⁹For other examples of sung expressions of this third theme, see "The Fiesta of the Faithful: Pablo Sosa and the Contextualization of Latin American Hymnody" in *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally*, C. Michael Hawn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 32-70.

⁵⁰Ajo, interview.

⁵¹Romero, email interview.

⁵²Paul Fernandez Ceballos, "Introduction" to *La misión de la Iglesia en una sociedad Socialista*, Sergio Arce Martínez (La Habana: Editorial Caminos, 2004), 13, translation mine.

⁵³Ajo, interview, translation mine.

⁵⁴Clara Ajo, Gradual and final hymn from *Misa Cubana*, electronic copy from the author, translation mine.

Celebrating Grace Hymnal: Five Years Later

BY DAVID M. TOLEDO

Southern Baptists have long been a singing people, led by such luminaries as William Walker, B.B. McKinney, William J. Reynolds, and David Music. These leaders, and countless other men and women, have guided the musical lives of Southern Baptists through the pendulum swings of cultural change, doctrinal controversy, and evangelistic fervor. In spite of these challenges, and perhaps as a direct result, hymnody has buoyed Baptist congregations through substantial musical changes.

This article will examine *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* published in 2010 by Celebrating Grace, Inc., founded out of Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. I will explore the musical and textual contents of the hymnal, compare it with its immediate predecessor, *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991), place it in its historical context within twenty-first century Southern Baptist life, and highlight several important contributions it makes to the study of hymnody. I will also reflect on its reception and adoption as a resource for congregational worship within its first five years of publication.

Southern Baptists: How and What We Sing

While the mid-twentieth century demonstrated a relatively homogeneous ideal for Baptist church music and congregational song, that has not always been the case. It is not necessary to belabor the point that Baptists have long-standing worship traditions that have shaped congregational piety and practice. Both the Charleston (formal, liturgically-minded) and Sandy Creek (enthusiastic, revivalistic) traditions became streams that influenced countless generations of worshippers. In many ways, these traditions remained distinct until the national denomination entities sought to establish a uniform hymnal for Baptist worship.

The Southern Baptist Convention has long had an interesting entanglement between popular song and traditional hymnody. B.B. McKinney, perhaps the denomination's most influential early musical leader, served as a music editor for a publishing house, as a faculty member at the School of Sacred Music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and as music director at Travis Avenue Baptist Church. This coalescence of varied roles in McKinney demonstrated the rich diversity of musical influences in Southern Baptist congregational

song. McKinney led the compilation of *The Broadman Hymnal* (1940) and served as the first secretary of the Church Music Department of the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board.

It is hard to underestimate the influence of the revivalistic tradition on Southern Baptist worship. What begin as an evangelistic or revival service became normative in many churches for corporate worship. The spontaneous nature of the Sandy Creek tradition, marked by enthusiasm, emotion, and dramatic salvation experiences, came to shape much of Southern Baptist life, especially in the southern states. The rise of the Sunday school song and gospel song fueled this tradition and provided musical material with which to convict the sinner and lead to conversion. The anthropocentric nature of these songs emphasized personal conversion and piety and focused less on the attributes and actions of God. While emerging from different streams, most notably the charismatic revivals of the 1960s, many current popular styles reflect the same concerns and attitudes of revivalistic worship. The megachurches of Southern Baptist life are direct descendants of the crusade revivals of earlier years and utilize many of the same techniques and structure.

At the same time, Baptists have a long-standing formal worship tradition represented by the worship at First Baptist Church, Charleston, South Carolina. This Calvinistic stream emphasized worship marked by simplicity and order. *Baptist Psalmody* (1850), published by Basil Manly, Sr. and Basil Manly, Jr., served as the first hymnal specifically published for Southern Baptists and represented the Charleston tradition. *The New Baptist Hymnal* (1926) was a joint publication between the American Baptist Publication Society and the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and sought to incorporate many of the advances made by the Oxford Movement and other reforms within traditional hymnody. The formal liturgical practices and style of hymnody characterizing this stream never became dominant, but maintain a rich heritage in many circles to the present day. This approach toward congregational worship and the fully-graded church music program became the dominating patterns for Baptist higher education in the 1960s. The 1975 and 1991 Baptist hymnals demonstrate this influence with their inclusion of many standard twentieth-century hymns and songs of non-Baptist origin.



Somebody's Callin' My Name

Jazz,
Jambalaya,
and
Jubilee

THE HYMN SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE July 12-16, 2015 New Orleans

Join us in "The Big Easy" for a conference filled with the music of New Orleans: jazz, gospel, and spirituals. We'll have a "hot time" (literally, but really worth it!) with inspiring singing, engaging, thought-provoking plenaries and lots of good food! This year will mark our first evening hymn festival of Jewish congregational song, held in the beautiful worship space of Temple Sinai, the first Reform congregation in Louisiana. We'll enjoy a "taste" of hymns with Louisiana connections and mark the 10th anniversary since the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. The recovery that the city has experienced is cause for jubilation and for singing! Two hymnal showcases will introduce new collections for Roman Catholic congregations. On Wednesday, you'll have a chance to visit the French Quarter prior to our evening festival of spirituals and gospel song in the historic St. Louis Cathedral on Jackson Square. Mark Miller, worship leader, composer, and teacher will lead a two-part workshop on enlivening the church's song.

As always, our sessions take place in an environment of sung faith and ecumenical hospitality. Sectionals cover a wide variety of subjects, from conference theme-related topics to global song to historic hymnody. Every day includes a hymn festival and occasion for corporate prayer.



PLENARIES

- Congregational Singing (Praising God) from the Margins** – Miguel and Deborah De La Torre
- Psalmody and Hymnody in Jewish Congregational Singing** – John H. Baron
- Spirituals and Gospel Song in African-American Congregational Singing** – Roy Belfield, Jr.
- The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology** – 2015 Emily Swan Perkins Presentation -- Carlton R. Young

FESTIVALS

- Sunday: Jambalaya Festival: When the Storms of Life are Raging: Hymns in Times of Crisis & Recovery** – John Ambrose & Debbie Lou Ludolph – St. Charles Ave. Baptist Church, 7100 Saint Charles Avenue
- Monday: Down by the Riverside: Jazz and Congregational Song** – Dan Damon & local jazz musicians – Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, 6367 St. Charles Avenue
- Tuesday: Shiru L'Adonai – Sing unto the LORD: A Feast of Jewish Congregational Hymnody** – Patricia Woodard & Cantor Joel Colman – Temple Sinai, 6227 St. Charles Avenue
- Wednesday: African-American Spirituals & Gospel Songs** – Melva Costen & Roy Belfield, Jr. – Cathedral-Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, 615 Pere Antoine Alley
- Thursday: Jubilee Festival: The Big Easy** – Mark Miller & Brian Hehn – St. Charles Ave. Presbyterian Church, 1545 State Street

HYMNAL SHOWCASES

- One in Faith** – Alan Hommerding, (WLP)
- Credo** – Vince Ambrosetti and Debra Lee Williamson (ILP Music)

WORSHIP

- Morning Prayer** – Tom Baynham & Stephanie Budwey
- Night Prayer** – Fred Graham

WORKSHOP

- Enlivening God's People through Sacred Songs of Social Justice** – Mark Miller

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

(meals & breaks not shown)

SUNDAY, July 12, 2015

- 1:00pm Check-in begins
- 2:00pm Bookstore opens
- 3:00pm Organ Recital
- 4:30pm First-timers' Reception
- 7:30pm Opening Hymn Festival



MONDAY, July 13, 2015

- 8:30am Morning Prayer
- 8:50am Welcome & Announcements
- 9:15am Plenary I
- 10:45am Plenary II
- 1:15pm Hymnal Showcase 1
- 2:30pm Sectionals I
- 4:15pm Sectionals II
- 7:30pm Hymn Festival
- 9:30pm Night Prayer

TUESDAY, July 14, 2015

- 8:30am Morning Prayer
- 9:00am Plenary III
- 10:45am Sectionals III
- 1:30pm Annual Meeting
- 4:00pm Sectionals IV
- 4:00pm Mark Miller Workshop, part 1
- 7:30pm Hymn Festival
- 9:30pm Night Prayer

WEDNESDAY, July 15, 2015

- 8:30am Morning Prayer
- 9:00am Plenary IV
- 10:45am Hymnal Showcase 2
- 1:30pm Sectionals V
- 1:30pm Mark Miller Workshop, part 2
- 3:00pm Bring and Sing
- 3:15pm Buses to the French Quarter for free afternoon and dinner on your own. Later bus available after Bring and Sing
- 7:30pm Hymn Festival
- 9:30pm Night Prayer

THURSDAY, July 16, 2015

- 8:30am Morning Prayer
- 9:00am Encore Sectionals
- 10:30am Closing Festival



WORKSHOP – Enlivening God's People through Sacred Songs of Social Justice

Join Mark Miller, Assistant Professor of Church Music from Drew University, in a workshop on enlivening the church's song. Cornell West says "Justice is what Love looks like in public." I envision prophetic worship leadership as helping people sing truth to power. In our allotted time I plan on introducing new songs and resources and sharing best performance practices. Come prepared for joyfulness, openness and playfulness - these are invaluable tools for this particular workshop. Enrollment is limited to 10 participants and takes the place of attending Sectionals IV & V. Registration is on a first-come, first served basis. There is no extra charge.

SECTIONALS I

1. Text Writers Colloquium – Adam M. L. Tice
2. A House of Praise, Collected texts of Timothy Dudley-Smith – Carl P. Daw, Jr. [Hope]
3. More About One in Faith – Alan Hommerding [WLP]
4. Hymn Tunes of James E. Clemens [Selah]
5. A New Hymnal for the Netherlands – Wim Ruessink
6. Improvisation, from Music to Liturgy – Suzi Byrd
7. Midsummer Night's Hymn Sings – Paul Richard Olson
8. More About the Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology – Carlton R. Young

SECTIONALS II

9. Emerging Scholars Forum – Lim Swee Hong
10. Claim the Mystery: New Hymn Texts by Adam M. L. Tice – Adam Tice & Michael Silhavy [GIA]
11. Hymn-Based Organ Music for Worship – David Furniss
12. Hymns in Popular Culture: The Hollywood Hymnal – Joseph Burgio
13. Jazz Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs: Resources for the Church Musician – Deanna Witkowski
14. From Generation to Generation; Many Voices Singing the One Body – Marty Haugen & Tony Alonso
15. Non-LDS Influences on Early LDS Hymnody – Wade Kotter
16. Singing Lutherans North and South – Mark Oldenburg

SECTIONALS III

17. Tune Writers Colloquium – Bob Batistini
18. Poetry of Grace: texts of Ruth Duck [Hope]
19. A Treasury of Faith, Lectorary Hymn Texts: New Testament Epistles, Series A, B, and C (text collection by Gracia Grindal) and From Depths of Love (text and tune collection by Patrick Michaels) [Wayne Leupold]
20. The Organist and Songleading: An Imaginative Responsibility – Eric Wall
21. Singing Our Savior's Story: Hymn Texts for the Christian Year since 1990 – James Abington
22. God Beyond All Names: Hymns, Psalms and Ritual Songs – Lori True
23. Rediscovering American Hymns 1800-1940, Based on Findings for the Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology – Clark Kimberling & Margaret Kimberling
24. Hymns in the New Orleans Jazz Funerals – Harry Eskew

SECTIONALS IV

25. Song Writers Colloquium – Marty Haugen
26. The Hymn Texts of David Gambrell [GIA]
27. Resources to Aid Congregational Singing – Mark Lawson [MorningStar]
28. Where Heart and Heaven Meet – Alice Parker
29. All Our Hope on God is Founded: Mental Health and Hymns that Heal – Hillary J. Doerries
30. Advent and Christmas: Sing A New Song, and A Renewed Theology – David Haas & Lori True
31. Louis F. Benson: America's Most Influential Hymnologist – Paul R. Powell
32. The History and Present Situation of Japanese Hymns – Saya Ojiri

SECTIONALS V

33. A Treasury of Faith, Lectorary Hymn Texts: New Testament Epistles, Series A, and A Treasury of Faith, Lectorary Hymn Texts: C, text and tune collections by Gracia Grindal – John Faustini & James Clemens [Wayne Leupold]
34. Music Ministry: Best Practices – Mark Lawson [MorningStar]
35. New Collection for the Season of Epiphany – David Schaap [Selah]
36. Church Music in the United States, 1760–1901: Essays by David W. Music & Paul Westermeyer – Paul Westermeyer
37. More About The CREDO Hymnal – Vince Ambrosetti & Debra Lee Williamson [ILP Music]
38. The Hymn Tunes of Calvin Hampton: What Happened? – Michael Silhavy
39. The DNA of African American Spirituals – Nancy L. Graham
40. Modern Episcopal Hymnody: The Hymnal 1982 in the 21st Century – Matthew Hoch



New Orleans is a major U.S. port, on the banks of the Mississippi River about 100 miles upriver from the Gulf of Mexico. It is the largest city and metropolitan area in the state of Louisiana. The population of the city was 343,829 as of the 2010 U.S. Census and the metropolitan population is just over one million. Established by French colonists, the city was named for the Duke of Orleans, Regent for Louis XV from 1715 to 1723. World famous for its celebrations – especially Mardi Gras – and as the birthplace of jazz, the city is also known for its French and Spanish Creole architecture, delicious food, and multicultural atmosphere.

The weather in the summer is hot and humid, with average high temperatures of 90 degrees and lows of 73 degrees F. All the buildings are air-conditioned, so layers of clothing may help you feel more comfortable both indoors and outside. Pack your umbrella or raincoat – July gets around 6 inches of rain on average.

Loyola University welcomes The Hymn Society for our annual meeting this summer. A Jesuit institution chartered in 1912, Loyola University has just under 4500 students each year, has five colleges including the College of Music and Fine Arts, is 20 minutes from the French Quarter, and is directly across from the Audubon Park and Zoo. For more information about Loyola, check out its website: <http://www.loyno.edu/jump/about/loyola-at-a-glance/loyola-history.php>

Our meetings will be held mainly in the Music and Communications Building, which opened in 1986, and adjacent Monroe Hall, which has just undergone a complete renovation and expansion. The conference bookstore and the dining facilities will be in the Danna Student Center, and Night Prayer will be held in Ignatius Chapel located in Bobet Hall. With the exception of Wednesday's festival in the French Quarter, hymn festivals will be held in locations on St. Charles Avenue, very close to the campus. The Sunday evening and Thursday morning festivals are furthest away: 2 blocks. There will be transportation by van for those who need assistance. The streetcar is also available, running every 10 minutes along the Avenue. The fare is \$1.25 in exact change.

The French Quarter, or Vieux Carré, is likely the most famous part of New Orleans, but there are a number of distinct and

a succinct description of these locales. <http://www.loyno.edu/jump/about/visitors/new-orleans-neighborhoods.php> We'll have a brief opportunity to visit the French Quarter, but you may wish to consider adding some extra days to your travel to take advantage of the many tours and sight-seeing venues in the area. One place to begin exploring the options is by checking out a dinner cruise on the paddle-wheeler, Creole Queen. <http://www.bigeasy.com/creolequeen>

ACCOMMODATIONS

Carrollton Hall provides suite-style residences: two bedrooms with a shared bath, all air-conditioned, all accessible by elevator. In each suite there is common space but no kitchen. There is a common kitchen on each floor. Linen rentals include two flat sheets, one pillowcase, one blanket, one bath towel, one hand towel, and one washcloth. Laundry facilities are free.

MEALS

Meals will be served in the dining facilities of Danna Student Center. There will be a variety of options, including vegetarian and vegan selections, for each meal. Meals can be purchased by cash or credit card, but we strongly encourage the use of meal cards to facilitate faster service.

TRAVEL

Be aware that driving in New Orleans can be complicated, with the need to watch for streetcars in addition to automobile traffic, and that parking is extremely limited. There is a \$5.00 per day parking fee at the university, a bargain compared to the cost of metered parking on the street – if you can find any. Nearly all the adjacent streets have a two-hour limit and the parking fine is \$40.

Airfare and other travel arrangements for this conference are available through Shannon Hall Walker at Kaleidoscope Journeys. She may be reached by phone: 888-429-0229, 860-429-8177 or email shannieone@aol.com.

New Orleans is served by Louis Armstrong International Airport (<http://www.flymsy.com/Default.asp>) Registrants will be sent information about airport shuttle reservations which can be made online at the discounted group rate of \$35 round trip. This service is provided by a shuttle company and will be available for all arriving and departing flights.

tip is approximately \$40.

Amtrak train service to New Orleans: <http://www.amtrak.com>

Greyhound service to New Orleans: <https://www.greyhound.com/en/locations/terminal.aspx?city=660583>
Customer Service: (504) 525-6075

CONFERENCE BOOKSTORE

The bookstore will offer titles featured in the conference programming plus many other helpful resources from a wide variety of publishers. The bookstore will open at 2 pm on Sunday, July 12 and generally will be open daytime hours Monday through Wednesday except when there are plenary sessions.

SILENT AUCTION

Please bring extra copies of hymnals and hymnological books in good condition to donate to the Silent Auction. Avoid bringing multiple copies of the same title. Due to space restrictions, please limit your contribution to a maximum of 25 books. The auction is a great place to find bargains to take home! Proceeds benefit the Austin C. Lovelace Scholarship fund, which helps students attend each Annual Conference.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Hymn Society offers Austin C. Lovelace scholarships to full-time and part-time students at the undergraduate or graduate level, as well as to previous Lovelace scholars. Applications forms are available from The Hymn Society office or at www.thehymnsociety.org/lovelace.pdf. Completed applications must be received in the Hymn Society office no later than April 1, 2015.





Somebody's Callin' My Name

Jazz,
Jambalaya,
and
Jubilee

THE HYMN SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

July 12-16, 2015 New Orleans

**HYMN SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2015 –
REGISTRATION FORM** Separate registration forms are required
for each attendee. Copy this form as needed or register online at
www.thehymnsociety.org.

Contact Information:

Full Name: _____

☐ Male

☐ Female

Preferred first name for nametag: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Religious denomination (optional): _____

Needs: ☐ on-campus golf cart transport (no additional charge)

☐ food allergy: specify _____

Have you attended a previous Hymn Society conference?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Workshop with Mark Miller ☐ Yes ☐ No

Attendance will take place of Sectional Units IV and V

Sectionals: You may select one in each unit.

Please circle your sectional choices.

Unit I	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Unit II	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Unit III	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Unit IV	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Unit V	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

Please list five sectionals you would like to have repeated as Encore
Sectionals.

☐ check enclosed payable to The Hymn Society

☐ charge my credit card as indicated below

Credit Card Information

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Expires _____ - _____ (mm/yy)

Signature _____

Please note that all fees are quoted in and must be paid in US funds drawn on a US bank. All fees include a non-refundable \$100 administrative fee. Refunds are unavailable **after June 1**.
Canadian and Overseas Member Registrants For Hymn Society Members: Registration by credit card above will save the extra cost of a check in US funds. For non-Hymn Society
members outside the US and Canada, please contact the office to discuss payment options. Registrations that include **housing** must be received by **June 22, 2015**. All registration forms
must be received by **July 2, 2015**. Walk-up registrations with off-campus housing will be accepted at the conference.

Registration Fee: Circle the fees and discounts that apply to this registration.

Full Conference Registration:		Reduced Conference Registration: <i>Full-time students and participating spouses/partners of attendees qualify for reduced registration fee.</i>	
Members:	\$365 – Through May 1, 2015	\$210 – Through May 1, 2015	
	\$420 – After May 1, 2015	\$240 – After May 1, 2015	
Non-Members:	Add \$75 for 12-month membership in The Hymn Society	Non-Member Students Only:	Add \$40 for 12-month student membership in The Hymn Society
Subtract \$25 from every full conference registration fee after the first one for additional registrations from the same church or school. <i>In order to receive this discount, registrations must be submitted at the same time.</i>		<i>[Note: Spouses/partners who attend only worship services and hymn festivals need not pay a registration fee.]</i>	
Your Registration Total:			

Housing Fee: (linens included)

	Single occupancy: Circle all that apply	Double occupancy: Circle all that apply
4 nights (Sunday – Wednesday)	\$150	\$130 per person
Extra night before – Saturday, July 11, 2015	\$40	\$30 per person
Extra night after – Thursday, July 16, 2015	\$40	\$30 per person
Your Housing Total:		

Meal Card:

☐ Meals for the duration of the conference in the Danna Student
Center – **\$160**

Contribution to Lovelace Scholarship Fund:

☐ \$ _____

Single Day Registration (two-day maximum)

Circle the day's fees that apply.	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Before May 1, 2015:	\$85	\$85	\$85
After May 1, 2015:	\$95	\$95	\$95
Single Event Registration:	The cost for attending individual Plenaries, Section- als, or Showcases is \$30 per event, to be paid by cash or check at the conference information desk.		

Enter Your Registration Total here: \$ _____
Enter Your Housing Total here: \$ _____
Enter Meal Card Fee here (\$160): \$ _____
Enter Your Lovelace Scholarship Contribution here: \$ _____
Total: \$ _____

The Hymn Society in the US & Canada • 8040 Villa Park; Suite 250 • Henrico, VA 23228-6507

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The publication of the *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991) marked the anniversary of two important entities within Southern Baptist life: the founding of the Sunday School Board in 1891 and the creation of the Church Music Department in 1941. It reflects many of the changes in hymnody that took place in the mid-twentieth century and incorporates traditional hymnody, praise choruses, global songs, and several representatives of modern hymnody. It represents the cumulative efforts of many influential leaders in Southern Baptist life on the local, state, and national level.

The 1991 hymnal also represents the last major Baptist music publication before the finalization of the conservative takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention. Many significant church musicians involved with the publication of the 1991 hymnal served at the denominational seminaries and other places of academic and church leadership. These leaders include well-respected members and fellows of The Hymn Society such as David Music, Michael Hawn, and Terry York. Many of the editors and influencers have since moved to other positions outside of national denominational service.

Similar to many other denominations, the congregations of the Southern Baptist Convention face tremendous challenges in navigating the turbulent waters of music and worship styles. Many congregations, led by influential megachurches, have adopted contemporary worship practices and no longer use hymnals in worship. Traditional hymns may be sung, but they are often recast as popular-styled songs led primarily with a praise band. The vast majority of churches in the Southern Baptist Convention have fewer than one hundred people in weekly worship attendance and struggle to balance the desires of differing generations of worshippers.

Turmoil Within the Southern Baptist Convention

Beginning in the late 1970s, the conservative wing of the Southern Baptist Convention led an initiative to transform denominational agencies and seminaries. The central issue in their efforts was the nature of Scripture and its role in shaping doctrine and belief. The resulting chaos revealed a considerable rift between the majority of the congregations and those in places of denominational leadership. Through successive elections of conservative presidents of the Convention, the trustee boards of the various agencies became decidedly conservative and instituted wholesale changes of leadership, faculty, and employees.

For many years a student could enter one of numerous Baptist colleges and receive an undergraduate degree that would adequately prepare him or her for seminary studies. Both the undergraduate and seminary experiences shared many characteristics with state universities and music graduate programs, but prepared students for a life of ministry service. The best and brightest church musicians headed these programs and shaped the Southern Baptist

musical landscape. Many of those who led the local, state, and national Southern Baptist Convention music departments have retired from active service or have transitioned to roles outside of mainstream denomination service. In many ways the landscape has become fragmented and compartmentalized, not unlike the worship services of Baptist congregations. The political controversies of the 1970s and 1980s led to several Baptist universities severing official ties with state conventions and charting their own course along the Baptist tradition.

The Emergence of Celebrating Grace

Following its publication in 1991, *The Baptist Hymnal* enjoyed widespread adoption throughout Southern Baptist congregations in the 1990s and early 2000s. The dramatic influx of praise choruses and worship songs led many Baptist congregations to supplement or replace this hymnal with non-affiliated hymnals such as *The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration* or *The Celebration Hymnal*. Because of the substantial turnover of leadership within the music department of Lifeway Christian Resources and the move toward the exclusive use of contemporary worship music in many congregations, there were no specific plans to produce a subsequent hymnal from the denomination. This led the leadership team of John Simons, Tom McAfee, and others to envision a hymnal that would meet the needs of a diverse group of congregations.

The *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* Editorial Board was decidedly academic in nature, led by John Simons, David Music, Milburn Price, and Stanley Roberts, all of whom hold positions of notable influence in Baptist academic life. Many members of the various advisory boards have extensive experience in the publication of hymnals for worship. John Simons, coordinating editor and co-founder of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*, describes the circumstances which prompted the creation of the hymnal:

Celebrating Grace Hymnal was created to meet a need for well-constructed resources for planning and leading congregational song from a Baptist heritage posture, and it cultivated the concept of families and people of all ages worshipping together. Personally, many hours of prayer, countless conversations with worship leaders, and the image of a parent sharing a hymnal with their child as they sang praises to God in corporate worship contemplation inspired me to begin this project. As well, the 1991 *Baptist Hymnal* was at the end of its projected lifespan, and there were no indications that Lifeway would produce a hymn book. Joining with Baptist entrepreneur and philanthropist J. Thomas McAfee III, I sought to create a worship book based on collaboration, contribution by church musicians and pastors, and connection between academia and the local church. The hymnal was to be a planning tool for liturgists and worship leaders, a practical book to be used

by all people to worship God, and a discipleship resource to help shape the future development of congregational song.¹

The editorial board demonstrated an awareness that their hymnal would primarily serve Baptist congregations, but also would cross denominational boundaries and find its way into hands of a diversity of worshipping communities. Simons notes,

The initial target audience of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* was Baptists of all kinds who used hymns as a basis for their corporate worship service However, we quickly discovered that *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* connected well beyond our Baptist target and resonated with many non-denominational, Bible church, United Methodist, Lutheran and Presbyterian churches that had choirs, trained church musicians, and a hymn-based worship style.²

This broad appeal led to the publication of the hymnal in two titles: *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* and *Celebrating Grace: Hymnal for Baptist Worship*.

Design, Format, and Organization

Each hymn features the title prominently displayed, with the general hymnal heading and specific subheadings alternating on opposing pages. Tune names and meter are located at the bottom right, along with the occasional cross-reference with other settings of the same tune in the hymnal. The authors, composers, sources, and copyright information are found on the bottom left of the page. The hymnal is consecutively numbered, including hymns and supplemental material.

Celebrating Grace embodies the doxological concept of God's self-revelation and humanity's response in worship. This operates on the macro and micro levels throughout the hymnal. The first section entitled "I Will Be Your God" contains hymns organized along the persons of the Trinity and are theocentric in nature. Specific hymns for the various seasons of the Christian year are found within the subsection "God the Son: The Incarnate One." This organizational feature emphasizes the Christological nature of our worship and locates the song of the people within the actions and salvific work of Christ. The second section, "You Shall Be My People," captures the worshipful responses of the people of God in light of divine revelation. The organizational structure emphasizes the communal nature of the Body of Christ, the traditional elements of Christian worship, and the church's witness to the Gospel in mission.

Language and Textual Issues

The Text and Tunes Committee demonstrated careful attention to balance historical Baptist hymnal traditions with the range of textual concerns facing modern hymnals. As a general rule, the majority of the hymns, especially those within the hymnic core, are found unchanged or with minor adjustments. The editorial

committee elected to use a lowercase first letter of each successive line of poetry and employ lowercase pronouns for God, while capitalizing various metaphors for God. When not thoroughly ingrained in popular usage, archaic language such as "ye" and "thee" were replaced with modern alternatives. Rather than changing problematic verses of familiar hymns, the committee occasionally elected to omit stanzas (for example, stanza two of "Brethren, we have met to worship") or replace them with more suitable alternatives. One noticeable difference between *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* and *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991) is the frequent addition of stanzas. Notable examples of this practice are "Open my eyes that I may see," "O for a thousand tongues to sing," "Sing praise to God who reigns above," and "The church's one foundation." Inclusive language alternatives were used when the general meaning and original intention remained. As a whole, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* reflects the more conservative approach common to most Baptist congregations with regards to these linguistic concerns. The hymnal finds the appropriate balance of serving a prophetic role in stimulating conversation and theological consideration while maintaining its viability as a resource for congregational song in Baptist congregations.

Scripture Readings, Supplemental Material, and Indices

Corporate scripture readings in a variety of formats permeate the contents of the hymnal. These readings reflect the overall organization principles of revelation and response. Several helpful indices follow the musical content, including typical resources such as indices of copyrights, authors, scriptural readings, topics, first lines and titles, and meter. One notable inclusion is an Outline of the Christian Year and description of Worship and the Christian Year written by Deborah Carlton Loftis and Paul A. Richardson.

Recognizing the tremendous technological advances that have transformed music publication and performance, *Celebrating Grace* offers a variety of digital resources. The centerpiece is the Worship Matrix that allows worship leaders to plan, design, and create worship experiences. This tool incorporates various liturgical resources including lectionary readings and allows worship planners to integrate the hymnal products. Rather than having the entire hymnal orchestrated at the beginning of the publication process, the publisher has taken a measured approach in which they engage a pool of composers to create unique orchestrations for selected hymns. Many of the hymns have standard single stanza orchestrations that may be repeated as necessary, while others have anthem orchestrations that are through-composed with accompanying choral parts. Still others have final stanza "festive finishes" or handbell arrangements. The *Celebrating Grace* website makes the music available for immediate purchase and download, as well as long-term storage for purchased products.

Contents

Having addressed the overall format, organization, and non-musical materials, it is now time to turn attention toward the musical content of the hymnal. In order to effectively evaluate the contents and song selection of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* and compare it with *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991), I entered the song titles and corresponding hymn tunes manually into a spreadsheet. There was a specific entry for each unique text/tune combination. Because of variances of hymn titles between the two hymnals, whenever the texts demonstrated broad uniformity, they were included on the same line in the spreadsheet. *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* consists of 614 unique text/tune combinations which I grouped into ten categories in order to ascertain the contents and their correspondence with the earlier Baptist hymnal.

Traditional Hymnody

Traditional hymnody consists of hymns that make up much of the common core of English language hymnody including Lutheran chorales, psalm settings, the works of Watts and Wesley, early American folk hymnody, and Victorian hymnody. One hundred sixty-three hymns found in *Celebrating Grace* fall into this category including 111 entries common to both hymnals. One of the interesting features of the new hymnal is the setting of traditional hymn texts with different tune combinations. Although several of the text and tune pairings appear across different hymnals, a few were new to this hymnal. Milburn Price set “God moves in a mysterious way” to a new tune entitled RIDGECREST, named after the Southern Baptist retreat center in North Carolina. *Southern Harmony* provided familiar tunes for “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds” (DOVE OF PEACE) and “Jesus calls us o’er the tumult” (RESTORATION). Mark Edwards and Ralph Manuel composed new tunes for “Lo, he comes with clouds descending” (WESNATE) and “O love that will not let me go” (DONNA) respectively. Lastly, Swee Hong Lim’s jubilant tune CHU LEUNG is paired with Wesley’s text “Ye servants of God.” “All things bright and beautiful” returns to its traditional ROYAL OAK tune, a move away from the 1991 *Baptist Hymnal* setting of SPOHR. “Christ is made the sure foundation” moves from UNSER HERRSCHER to EDEN, “In Christ there is no east or west” from ST. PETER to MCKEE, and “Jesus, Lover of my soul” from MARTYN to ABERYSTWYTH.

Gospel Song/Sunday School Song

One of the enduring legacies of Southern Baptist congregational song has been the composition, celebration, and propagation of the gospel song throughout its hymnals. As we have seen earlier, the revivalistic Sandy Creek Tradition found an ideal pairing with Sunday School songs and gospel songs made popular throughout the 1800s and early 1900s. It is not surprising then that gospel songs made up the largest percentage of

the materials in 1991 *The Baptist Hymnal* (31%). Many of these entries speak to the need for personal repentance and conversion and featured prominently in the Baptist revivalistic worship style. As most denominations have struggled to navigate the waters of the so-called worship wars, the struggle for Southern Baptists has often been between contemporary popular styles and the gospel song, not traditional hymnody as in other denominations. It is not uncommon to hear new musical arrangements of traditional hymnody in megachurch worship services alongside contemporary worship songs. By and large, the gospel song genre is a quickly diminishing style in modern Baptist worship services.

Even a cursory examination of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* reveals a marked turn away from this genre with the omission of many of the revivalistic gospel songs. Missing from the collection are such songs as “Are you washed in the blood,” “Count your blessings,” “Faith is the victory,” “I’d rather have Jesus,” “Room at the cross,” “Set my soul afire,” “There is power in the blood,” and “We have heard the joyful sound.” Another theme prominent in many gospel songs was the emphasis upon eternal life and heaven, perhaps due to the challenging circumstances of life during the composition of these songs. Many of these hymns are missing in the hymnal and have been replaced by those with a greater emphasis upon social justice and the Church’s mission on earth. This shift corresponds with the change of focus in recent decades of hymnody in general, although many Southern Baptist congregations fail to address these issues in corporate worship.

Praise Chorus

One of the prominent features of *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991) was the inclusion of many of the most well-known choruses that emerged following the Jesus Movement and charismatic renewal of the 1960s. For the sake of this discussion, choruses were identified as short-form works limited to one or two stanzas or choruses, without great attention to poetic meter and structure. The 1991 hymnal contained 64 such choruses including “Seek ye first,” “I love You Lord,” and “Glorify thy Name.” *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* featured the praise chorus in a much less conspicuous manner with only 38 such choruses for just 6% of the total contents. Most of these choruses are found in the 1991 hymnal, but several new choruses are included as well. Some notable examples include Ken Medema’s “Lord, listen to your children praying” and Getty and Townsend’s “Creation sings.”

Worship Song

There can be little argument that the popular styles that began to find their way into the song of many congregations in the latter decades of the previous century have radically transformed church music. The introduction of the acoustic and electric guitar, amplification, synthesizers, and drum sets have replaced the piano,

organ, and choirs for many congregations. Following in the footsteps of the gospel song musicians who wrote and collected songs for worship, the contemporary Christian music artist became one of the leading figures in congregational song in the latter twentieth century through the present. What began with Keith Green, André Crouch, Amy Grant, and Michael W. Smith has given way to Chris Tomlin, Matt Redman, Hillsongs, Paul Baloche, and many others. Beginning in the late 1990s and early 2000s, a subtle shift began to occur in which those artists recognized the untapped market of “praise and worship” music and began writing multi-stanza songs intended for corporate worship. While these songs often do not possess the lyrical quality or musical complexity of traditional hymnody, increasingly they have become theologically sophisticated and doctrinally rich. Whereas other hymnals have widely adopted these songs in their hymnals, the editors of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* took a much more selective approach. Only 22 of the most commonly sung songs, a mere 3% of the total contents, were included in the hymnal, most notably, “How great is our God,” “Shout to the Lord,” and “You are my all in all.”

Modern Hymnody

The twentieth century saw a worldwide explosion of new hymn composition. Through the reach of globalization, diverse musical styles and influences crossed borders with ease. In the aftermath of two world wars, the civil rights movements, and great social upheaval throughout the middle of the century, Southern Baptists struggled to incorporate music that expressed the spirit of the age. Beginning with the work of William J. Reynolds in the *Baptist Hymnal* (1975) and extending into the 1991 edition, greater attention was given to burgeoning hymn-writing of the so-called “New English Renaissance” and included works by Wren, Dudley-Smith, Kaan, and Pratt Green. To many congregations, these songs were their first musical experiences with social justice issues and the hymns challenged them to expand their view of the gospel outward from conversion and personal piety.

While it is safe to say that many of these hymns did not gain widespread popularity within Southern Baptist circles, their presence in the denominational hymnal serves a prophetic voice urging congregations into deeper theological consideration and action. For the purpose of this analysis, I classified songs as “modern hymns” if they were written in the twentieth or twenty-first century and exhibited characteristics consistent with formal hymnody; that is, lyrics with multiple stanzas with attention given to poetic and hymnic meter, rhyme scheme, and other literary devices.

The Baptist Hymnal (1991) contained 107 of these modern hymns including “When in our music God is glorified,” “Tell out, my soul, the greatness,” and “When Christ was lifted from the earth.” New hymnody was an obvious emphasis of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

as is evidenced by the inclusion of 207 such hymns, making up the largest percentage of the hymnal at 34%. David Music, editor and chair of the Texts and Tunes Committee describes some of the changes made with respect toward modern hymnody, “Texts using archaic and exclusive language for humans in historic hymns were generally altered, although not invariably. Some hymns were returned to their original forms (i.e., before their alteration in *The Baptist Hymnal* 1991).”³

Several new tunes were used for hymns included in the 1991 hymnal including some by Baptist hymn writers. Paul Richardson composed STUART for “As He gathered at his table” and Mark Edwards set “Easter people, raise your voices” to his WESNATE. Other Baptist contributions included the texts “God, our Father, you have led us” and “Living stones” by Terry York, and “Send forth your word, O God” by Milburn Price.

The modern hymns of Stuart Townend and Keith and Kristyn Getty feature prominently in *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*. The depth of these texts and singability of the tunes have fostered a renewal of congregational song in both contemporary and traditional churches. Notable inclusions by these authors include “How deep the Father’s love for us,” “In Christ alone (My hope is found),” “Speak, O Lord,” and “The power of the cross.”

Songs for the Christian Year

In light of Vatican II and the cross-denominational worship renewal that followed, Baptist adherence to the Christian calendar is on the rise. Many congregations celebrate both Advent and Christmas, and more churches are expanding their Easter celebrations to include Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. Previous Southern Baptist hymnals reflected this lack of musical development of congregational song. *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* has sought to fill these gaps with twenty hymns for Advent, fourteen songs for Epiphany, and a substantial section of hymns for the Lenten season. The fact that the hymnal editors chose the category of Lent demonstrates the shift in attitudes among Southern Baptists toward the celebration of the church year.

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

Another area of historical deficiency in Baptist worship has been songs for the two recognized ordinances—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The 1991 hymnal contains only three hymns for baptism! *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* does better with seven such hymns including new hymns such as “We are raised to newness of life” and “Come to the water.” For a denomination that identifies itself through the ordinance of baptism, the lack of music for baptism most likely speaks to a neglectful approach toward the corporate celebration of this action.

Baptism is identified most commonly as the first act of obedience of a believer following conversion and less as an entrance into the worshipping community. As such,

it is individualistic in nature and the congregants tend to be spectators rather than participants. The editors of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* sought to correct this focus with regards to both baptism and the Lord's Supper. It shows a definite shift toward this congregational approach with "Come and feast, for all are welcome" and "We are one in Christ."

Global Hymnody and Spirituals

The 1991 hymnal included fourteen songs that can be categorized as either global hymnody or African American spirituals. *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* demonstrates a definite interest in songs from global Christianity with the inclusion of twenty-nine such entries. It marks the first time songs from the Taizé and Iona communities have found their way into Southern Baptist hymnals, with seven and two inclusions respectively. Baptists have long had a presence in Latin and South America, and specifically Brazil. Several Brazilian hymns can be found in *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* including "At the break of day," "For the troubles and sufferings," and "O sing to the Lord."

Reception

Since its initial publication in 2010, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* has experienced numerous printings and is now in the pews of hundreds of churches, colleges, and seminaries throughout the United States. In addition to the physical hymnal, its repository of supplemental resources continues to expand both quantitatively and qualitatively. There are now over 200 anthem arrangements of hymns by notable composers such as Lloyd Larson, Michael Cox, Robert Sterling, C. L. Bass, Cindy Berry, and Mary McDonald. *Celebrating Grace* offers a broad range of orchestral arrangements for congregational worship including extended orchestrations, a jazz series, and vocal solos. As its reception and popularity grow, the publisher of *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* continues to provide new musical resources, ensuring that the contents remain fresh and accessible to congregations of all sizes and musical tastes.

The *Celebrating Grace* brand is flourishing and extending its reach into other areas of congregational song and worship. *Growing in Grace*, its graded choir curriculum, provides biblically-based music resources developed by lifelong music educators and children's choir leaders. The Celebrating Grace Worship and Leadership Conference has offered training and encouragement for church musicians, pastors, and laity involved in the worship planning and music making in the local church. At the foundation of each of these endeavors is the *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* and its significant diversity of musical and textual resources.

Observations

Celebrating Grace Hymnal marks an important juncture in the congregational song of Southern Baptists. Its story cannot be told without recognizing the publication of the *Baptist Hymnal* in 2008. As the Celebrating Grace editorial board began its initial planning sessions, Lifeway Christian Resources, the official publishing entity of the Southern Baptist Convention, announced plans for a new hymnal. Their efforts, begun and completed between the time of *Celebrating Grace*'s initial plans and ultimate publication, display great influences of popular contemporary styles. Although the two hymnals were published within years of each other, they are substantially different and serve divergent constituencies. *The Baptist Hymnal* (2008) is an updated version of *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991) and represents a considerable shift towards contemporary musical styles within Southern Baptist life. It maintains the core hymnody that is the legacy of Baptists, but limits its new entries largely to popular musical styles. It is a record of what many Southern Baptist congregations were singing at its time of publication and provides a host of resources to supplement congregational song and the music ministries that serve these churches. Likewise, the *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* lies firmly within the stream of historic Baptist hymnals. It also shows substantial influence from the numerous denominational hymnals published in recent decades. The organizing principles and its emphasis upon the church year reflect a growing awareness of historical patterns of worship and mark a departure from the revivalistic practices of earlier Southern Baptists. The churches that will use *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* are likely to incorporate liturgical elements of corporate worship and will be well served by the resources contained within the hymnal. Its distinctive nature lies in its pastoral and prophetic role to shepherd and guide congregational worship to both familiar and new musical expressions. It serves as a musical resource from which church musicians and worship leaders can educate their congregations and help them encounter hymns that reflect the global Christian community.

The hymnal editors of *Celebrating Grace* showed care in their incorporation of popular hymns and worship songs. Their selections demonstrate a concern for corporate expressions of worship rather than musical celebration of the individual's experience of worship. These songs find their place alongside historic hymns, new texts that demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of social issues, and songs of the global church. As has been previously mentioned, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* is a significant departure from previous Baptist hymnals dominated by gospel song styles. Southern Baptists have a long history of evangelistic fervor, but as *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* demonstrates, the methodology and approach of the evangelistic efforts appears to be changing. This can be attributed to several factors including cultural change, seeker-friendly megachurch services, and a shift of emphasis toward broader social issues. The hymnal seeks to

provide a congregation with a broad repertoire of worship resources that lend themselves to more than a revival service model. The structural principles, immediately familiar to more liturgical streams of Christendom, reflect a change in approach of some Baptist congregations. Moving forward, Southern Baptist congregations will hold equally their evangelistic heritage and a growing sense of identity and unity within the larger Christian community. *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* is an effective vehicle for this transition. *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* is an important contribution to hymnology and represents a significant stream of Baptist worship practices.

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Notes

¹John Simons, e-mail message to author, June 30, 2014.

²Ibid.

³David W. Music, e-mail message to author, October 5, 2014.

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HYMN PERFORMANCE

A Dialogue for Piano and Congregation

JAMES E. CLEMENS

Soon after my family moved to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, Ken Nafziger, a music professor at Eastern Mennonite University, asked if I would compose a short set of piano pieces based on the hymn tune LEONI. Ken planned to lead this hymn at Park View Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, where the congregation sings from the 1992 *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (HWB), as well as its two supplements.¹ LEONI appears in HWB in the key of F minor, paired with a version of the Jewish doxology text “The God of Abraham praise.”²

After some discussion, Ken and I decided to go with a straightforward piano introduction (Theme) and three stand-alone variations, each reflecting on the text of the verse sung before it. The luxurious acoustics in the Park View sanctuary, coupled with robust congregational singing, can easily overwhelm the sound of a grand piano. Keeping that in mind, we devised the following pattern, with the verses sung a cappella in four parts:

Piano: Theme

Congregation: verse 1

Piano: Variation 1

Congregation: verse 2

Piano: Variation 2

Congregation: verse 3

Piano: Variation 3

Theme

The musical score for the Theme is written in F minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. It begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The melody in the right hand is composed of eighth and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with quarter and eighth notes. The piece concludes with a ritardando (rit.) marking and a final sustained chord.

Since the congregation would sing verse one after my introduction, I used the harmonization from *HWB*, with a few alterations to make my part more suitable for the piano. I kept every voice in its original octave (no added bass octaves), held out notes that repeat in the three lower voices, and delayed the tenor entrance in measure seven to add some rhythmic interest.

To compose the variations, I looked closely at the character of the text in each verse, paying particular attention to imagery that could be enhanced musically.

Verse 1 text:

The God of Abrah'm praise.
All praised be the Name,
who was, and is, and is to be,
is still the same;
the one eternal God,
ere all that now appears,
the First, the Last, beyond all thought
through timeless years!

Variation 1

The form of a circle – *eternal; the First, the Last* – came to mind, which made me think of a canon. The phrases *was, and is, and is to be* and *through timeless years* evoked unimaginable strength and power.

Having refrained from adding extra bass in the introduction, I chose to put the melody in the left hand in low octaves, making the most of the ringing bass strings of the grand piano (strength and power). To reinforce this texture, the right hand also plays octaves, starting half a measure later to mimic the form of a canon. Rather than adhering to an exact imitation of the melody, I let the upper line find its own rhythms and shapes, giving this variation the feel of a heavy-footed two-part invention.³

Variation 1 ♩ = c. 132

The musical score for Variation 1 is presented in three systems. The first system starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic, a ritardando (*rit.*) marking, and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The piece concludes with a final cadence.

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Verse 2 text:

God's spirit flowing free,
high surging where it will –
in prophet's word it spoke of old –
is speaking still.
Established is God's law,
and changeless it shall stand,
deep writ upon the human heart,
on sea, or land.

Variation 2

The first two lines of this verse – especially the phrases *flowing free* and *high surging* – gave me some license to change the meter to a lilting 6/8 and move both hands up to a higher register of the piano. To add to the dance, I used some gentle syncopation in the melody, accompanied by sparse arpeggios underneath.

The reflective, dreamlike feel, which helps illuminate another facet of God's character, also serves as a contrast in mood, texture, and dynamics to the first and third variations.

Variation 2 ♩. = c. 80

p

(with pedal)

rit.

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Verse 3 text:

God has eternal life
implanted in the soul.
God's love shall be our strength and stay,
while ages roll.
Praise to the living God!
All praised be the Name,
who was, and is, and is to be,
is still the same!

Variation 3

By the time the text proclaims *Praise to the living God!* all stops, so to speak, have been pulled out; therefore, this climax becomes the loudest and fullest phrase of these variations. I arrived at the analogous spot in the tune (the pickup to measure 9) by starting with full chords, a driving quarter-note/half-note/quarter-note rhythm in the left hand, and a crescendo from mezzo piano to fortissimo.

Since verse three has come full circle to the strength and agelessness of God – in fact, lines 6 through 8 are identical to lines 2 through 4 in verse one, except for the ending punctuation – I decided to play with that form a bit with this final variation. From Variation 1, I brought back a taste of the contrapuntal octaves, gave a brief nod to the rhythmically embellished melody (measures 9 and 10), and used the same descending shape for an extended ending, allowing the music to wind down slowly.

Variation 3 $\text{♩} = c. 132$

Arrangement copyright © 2005 James E. Clemens

When Ken and I led this hymn on that Sunday morning at Park View, the decision to follow each of the sung verses with an instrumental variation created space for the congregation to dwell on the words they had just sung, guided by a wordless interpretation from the piano: a dialogue between the singers and the pianist. Our practical decision to alternate between singing and listening, made because of the sonorous acoustics of the sanctuary, gave rise to a rich, contemplative experience with the hymn.

A few years later, we used this same hymn in another setting with a much smaller congregation. The room lacked supportive acoustics, and the singers were not a group that met regularly, so we made a few significant but seamless alterations to the dialogue:

- Piano: Theme
- Congregation (four parts): verse 1, accompanied by Piano: Theme
- Piano: Variation 1
- Congregation (four parts, a cappella): verse 2
- Piano: Variation 2
- Congregation (unison): verse 3, accompanied by Piano: Variation 3

These changes still allowed time for the singers to contemplate the words from the first two verses, while adding the experience of singing the powerful tune in unison, accompanied by the richness of Variation 3.

Wherever your church gathers, I invite you to give this form of dialogue a try, with LEONI or any hymn that fits your circumstances. The variations need not be complex: a solo flute or oboe playing a tune with little or no embellishment might be just what the situation calls for, or a string ensemble, a recorder trio, a trumpet and bass duo, bagpipes ... endless possibilities. And if you have a composer or two in your congregation, this might be just the right way to start a collaborative project.

James E. Clemens, a Life Member of The Hymn Society, is a composer and performer.

Notes

¹*Sing the Journey* (2005) and *Sing the Story* (2007).
²For more on LEONI (known as YIGDAL in some collections) and the words sung with it, see Edward L. Doemland’s article “The Hymn Tune LEONI and Its Texts” in the Winter 2012 issue of THE HYMN.
³The Two-Part Inventions of J. S. Bach never fail to amaze and inspire me. They are little masterpieces of contrapuntal writing.

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